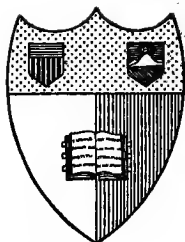


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Studies in the Bhagavad Gita

THE YOGA OF DISCRIMINATION



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STUDIES
IN
THE BHAGAVAD GĪTĀ

BY
THE DREAMER

The Yoga of Discrimination

ENGLISH EDITION

LONDON
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STUDIES IN THE BHAGAVAD GÎTÂ.

FOREWORD.

THE immortal poem, the Bhagavad Gîtâ—the Lord's Song,—forms an integral part of the great national epic, the *Mahâbhârata*, and is a book by itself at the same time, and, as such, can be studied by itself in many and various ways. It can be approached with a poet's spirit, and its grand imagery and far-reaching vistas of thought, its felicities of expression, coupled with pithiness and the other beauties of language and diction with which it is replete, will well repay such a perusal. To the historian its value as an epoch-making synthesis of the various schools of thought, throwing a flood of light on the moot philosophical questions of the day, is immense, showing, as it does, how the thoughts of subsequent eras of history came to be modified and coloured by it. To the metaphysician it represents the extreme high-water mark of human aspiration to unravel the mysteries of being ; and every school of metaphysics, saving the *Charvâka*—the Indian Materialistic School—acknowledges its place amongst the hoary *Upanishads* of antiquity. To the individual also, it is always an invaluable scripture :—thus it is useful to the Brahmacharin * as containing precepts

* Chaste Student.

for conduct ; to the householder it is necessary, furnishing him, as it does, with a loftier view of life and character. So again to the *Bhikshu* * the *Gnânin* † and the *Bhakta* ‡ alike ; for all it contains an inexhaustible fount of wisdom, of guidance and of consolation. The object of the present papers must therefore necessarily be defined, and some pains taken in this direction will not be entirely out of place and useless.

To the writer, and from his standpoint of life, the Gîtâ is eminently a book of advice and guidance, necessary to help a student to tread the path of NIVRITTI—non-attachment. To him it is the finger-post which indicates the path leading to service. It is the Song of Life, the eternal song of harmony, which comes to the aspirant after Brotherhood and Service—the Song which heard, makes life a harmony and therefore worth living. It is the physical embodiment of the help which is given to every toiler who strives to follow in the path of Love and Sacrifice, the footsteps of Those Mighty Beings called, very appropriately, the Lords of Compassion—of Those Who have renounced the Bliss of Nirvana, and sacrificed, like unto the Logos, the repose of perfect bliss and felicity in order that They may be the beacon lights to conduct the stragglers safely home, and that They may help in the realization of the Oneness of Life, which is at the basis of a true Brotherhood of Humanity. To the writer, therefore, the Gîtâ is, apart from its deep philosophical merits, a book of conduct, of solace and comfort. This need not disturb any one in his own ideal for the paths are as multifarious as the individuals themselves ; and though we may travel along the one particularly suited to us by karma and heredity, yet we may rest assured that, as Kalidas puts it, we shall all reach the goal alike, for :—

“ Though the paths are various according to the various

* Ascetic.

† Seeker after Supreme Knowledge.

‡ Devotee.

Shastras, all of these lead unto Thee, like rivers flowing into the one ocean."

Though, as a matter of fact, the whole of the Lord's Song is heard only at the final struggle, when the wise soul looks for the Warrior within—at the great battle where the human soul has to conquer the *human* in it and cross over to the other side of immortality and service—yet snatches of the supreme harmony come to a pupil while struggling earnestly even on the lower planes. But it comes only when there is disharmony in his nature, when a critical state of consciousness is to be passed. And when it is once heard, the soul can never entirely forget it, though temporary glammers may come and shut out the Light from his eyes.

These thoughts are therefore put down that they may perchance reach a fellow-struggler, and help him (however insignificant and trivial that help may, in reality, be) to fight on, and cheer him with the soothing idea of not being quite alone on the Path, and of having a brother struggling like himself. For him principally are these broken and disjointed thoughts intended, and to him, as to the writer, the Gîtâ will be *The Light on the Path*.

CHAPTER I.

ARJUNA'S DESPONDENCY.

To the writer, Arjuna's despondency is symbolical of what may be termed the "critical" stages in the life of an aspirant: when he is struggling out of the meshes of Maya and trying to forge the link which will connect him with the higher life. This keen struggle between the personal self whose life is one of self-assertion, and the Higher Self whose life is one of duty and, later on, of gladsome sacrifice,—this struggle, which sometimes takes the form of a conflict between duties, always comes when the aspirant is about to evolve out of the lower planes of being, of the senses and the mind. This struggle comes not to those who have *kama for self**—who live, move, and have their being in desires, grosser or finer, and whose existence is measured by qualitative and quantitative effects in the *Mānomaya kōsha*, the mind-body. It comes only when the giant weed of desire flowers, and when, by innumerable existences on earth and interludes of disembodied life in the astral and devachanic planes, the man has garnered the materials wherefrom a centre of self-consciousness can evolve. It comes only, when by practice of *Dharma*, the causal body is fed and nourished, and then made an organism with a

* Gītā, II. 43.

quasi-independent life of its own—when the man, no longer under the absolute sway of *kama* like a helpless baby, has controlled it to some extent and has evolved the higher qualities of mind and intellect, whereby he can separate himself in thought at least from his lower vehicles, acting more from inner initiatives than through external compulsions. It comes when the man is self-conscious in desires, when he can separate himself from the mental and lower bodies, knowing them to be of the not-I, and can use them as his instruments to a certain extent, instead of being passively guided by them. Nay, the final struggle comes when a man has, like Arjuna, conquered Swarga and is able to function there with all the powers of self-consciousness thoroughly evolved.* To the man under the senses and the mind, the whole being is limited by these, and he feels nothing higher which is incongruous with them. The universal rule is that struggle begins when a man has come under the workings of two distinct and apparently conflicting sets of forces in nature. The struggle therefore is indicative of the fact that the centre of individuality, which in the ordinary man is like a mere tiny spark of light, so to say, has been fed and nourished by the food supplied by the materials of growth contained in the lower bodies, the *fuel* of *kama* and *manas* involved in things and thoughts, and thus developed into a flame. At this stage only does a man cognise his duties no longer mediately through society and its surroundings—through the external authority of the Shastras and Revelation,—but rather directly as laws of his own growth, no longer viewing these, like an Utilitarian or a Vaisya, weighing and balancing them only as they appear useful or not, as they subserve his desire-nature or not : no longer relating them to society or its needs—but rather beginning to realise them *per se* with a certain sense of absoluteness, as

* Mahâbhârata, *Vanaparva*.

the expression of his own inner life, and the mode of his own inner being. With such a man duty or *dharma* is no wooden law, something imposed on him from without, having for its sanction some dire retribution, social, moral or karmic, —something which is related to and is the expression of the pleasures and pains of the personality limiting and conditioning the inner life and being. His duties, on the contrary, are related to the individual in him; they rest on an authority which is internal; they are built on the solid foundation of his own being. Hence the commands of duty become to him more or less absolute in their nature. Pleasures may come and go, happiness may attend the working out of the duties, or even pain and anguish may be his portion, yet his view-point does not change. Nations may perish or prosper, society may regard his actions in any light, yet these considerations have no direct weight with him. His duties are more or less impersonal and therefore unrelated to things in Time and Space, but are, on the contrary, the laws and modes of the expression of the Divine Life within the Ego. Arjuna has evolved a well-defined centre of individuality; he can function sometimes in that high plane of being. He has served in Swarga (heaven): narrow egoism and fear have no influence with him. The personal self is powerless directly to influence his conduct; it has apparently no voice in the regulation of his life. For by the practice of religion and virtue, he has purified and controlled to some extent the lower vehicles in which the personality is ordinarily reflected. Yet it is not dead, for though it has receded from the body of actions and the subtle body, yet it is there in a subtle form to colour and distort his thoughts: for *Kama* envelops not only the senses and the mind, but colours also the principle of Buddhi—the principle of true *apperception*.* With its in-

* Gîtâ, III. 42.

sidious action it now begins to cast its glamour over what is regarded as *duty*—over what the man recognises as the truest manifestation of his being. He had hitherto fought against his lower nature with this powerful ally—this sense of duty ; and now that very stronghold of his being is betrayed into the enemy's hands. The lower personality whose nature is *kama*, which always wants to grasp things for itself, imperceptibly colours his duties : his intellect is swayed by *kama* in this subtle form. He had before this fed the Ego in the causal body with self-abnegation and duty—he had grown by this principle of separation working in this subtle and almost intangible way. For are not the virtues and the duties as ordinarily understood separative, positing the I against the not-I, and thereby feeding the body of individuality? And now he is asked to kill out in all appearance this very sense of I, thus fed and nourished into manifestation. By the force of the newly awakening spiritual will, he has now to recognise this individuality as not himself, but the thing which he has with pain created for his use,* and by means of which he purposes to reach the life beyond the individuality with its characteristic marks of *Raga* and *Dvesha*, attraction and repulsion. Hence is it that despondency comes, and the whole existence of the man seems bleak and purposeless. Every thing which he had hitherto relied on, even Dharma, seems to fall away and elude his grasp. Even his virtues are utilised by the lower self of *kama* to weigh him down. In the lurid light cast upon every thing by the personal self, in the glamour cast upon the Ego, making it mistake the causal body as the source and the limit of his individuality, instead of being merely one of its vehicles, every thing appears inverted, and it is very difficult for the human soul alone and unaided to discern the laws of being of its next higher stage of evolution.

* *Light on the Path*, 20.

Arjuna, who is significantly called *Gudakesha*,* “the lord of sleep,” is unwilling to take up arms on the holy plains of Dharma, not because he is weak and impotent, not because he does not know what duty is, nor because he relies on any external aid, for has he not proved his prowess in Svarga by fighting against and conquering the enemies of the Lord of the Heavens? Has he not made a valiant stand against the Great Lord Mahadeva himself, and thereby got from the Supreme Being the weapon called *Pâshupata*? Has he not deservedly earned the name of *Parantapa*—the conqueror of his enemies? Yet a far subtler influence than the ordinary *kama* working through the senses and the mind, a more insidious enemy than the hostile forms outside the I-consciousness masters him for the time. The tinge of personality is on his virtues, and those very higher forms of life and being which he had with pain and sacrifice evolved—those very higher forms of consciousness have become to him a source of limitation, being used for that purpose by the subtle personality acting as *Raga*, attachment to formal life, *Yoga*, desire of possession, and *Kshema*, extreme compassion for the forms as opposed to the life within. These virtues, which at the earlier stages were the very *sine quâ non* of evolution and growth, are now used as dead weights to stop his further progress. His intellect becomes confused; he cannot distinguish between the form and the life. He loses sight of the great fact, that every Ego has to give up all likes and dislikes, *all love for life in form* as well as *all attraction for formless life*; that the Ego’s progress henceforth lies in recognising itself as merely an aspect and a mode of the Divine energy instead of being a separate centre by itself. Thus situate, from the perplexed soul goes forth the cry, “I do not know which is better for us, whether if we conquer or whether if we be conquered; for

* Gîtâ, II. 6.

those, by killing whom we cannot live, those sons of Dhritarashtra are now arrayed against us, before me."* And he feels doubtful whether the sovereignty which is the guerdon of the fight, is one worth attainment at the cost of what appears to him as the wholesale slaughter of those for whom alone the kingdom and its enjoyments are coveted.† This is not the language of a selfish soul hardened in its own sense of the I; this is not the expression of an ordinary egoist, caring for himself alone, in matters worldly or in possessions spiritual. Arjuna knows what duties are; he has further evolved to a high degree the loftier qualities of love and compassion; and these are made the barrier to check his further progress. He had related by his past life of asceticism and renunciation all virtues to himself, to the individualised self in him, and now he has to outgrow such self-relation and to recognise the oneness of the Divine Life. All his actions in self-denial and asceticism, in duty and sacrifice, had been due to the action of the Ego, the human Monad in him, and thus had the Human Ego for their centre. Hitherto he had found in all these things the expression of the true life of the Man, the Individual, and hence he is called the incarnation of the great Rishi *Nara*. But now the task demanded of him is to kill out the likes and dislikes of the *man* in him; now he is asked to sacrifice all the highest colourings of the individual man. He is asked to recognise the Divine Life in him and to lay aside the limits of individuality—the forms through which the sense of individuality hitherto found its best and truest expression. The very forms of the mind, of the virtues, of the intellect which helped him to know his individual life, he is now expected to kill out. In short, he is asked, as already said, to grasp his whole individuality firmly, and by force of his spiritual will dimly bodying forth, as it were, he

* Gîtâ, II. 6.

† Gîtâ, II. 11.

has now to recognise this individuality as not himself, but that which he has with pain created for the use of the Supreme—the One Life—and by means of which he is slowly to reach the life beyond individuality. Hitherto he had realised the latent divinity, the separated individual, expressing itself in and through all the forms of being and bliss ; but now he has to kill out the attachment to the form of individuality by finding the one Divine Life pervading all, the one Divine manifesting through all the forms, including the form of individuality—the one Life of which the I in him is but a faint reflection. Hitherto he has been building slowly, through the long lines of past evolution, a stable centre which can remain unaffected and unchanged in the midst of the dissolution of the lower forms, a centre which can resist successfully the tremendous strains of a *pralaya*. But now he has to kill out the dependence of this Divine centre on the womb of individuality—the causal body—the *kârana sharîra* ; he has now to expand the stable I-notion, so as to transcend all forms in Time and Space. He has now to combine perfect plasticity with perfect stability—so that the centre may embrace and respond to the Divine Life. He has further to avoid falling into the opposite error of attachment to formless life. For he is to be a warrior in the region of form, recognising the forms as being integral parts in the scheme for the expression of the Divine Life. He has, in short, to discover the Supreme Harmony in which the thousands of subnotes are all blended and synchronised for the purposes of a higher symphony as against the dull monotony of a single note.

In this extreme crisis to which the soul is put, in this extreme election, he has to choose once for all between sacrifice and everything that is lower, everything that limits and imprisons the Life. In this strait, the very brooding over of the Spirit energises, by a process of induction, the

personal, nay, the individual part of man. The Human Monad, bent upon securing for itself a separate existence, tries to throw off the Divine influence, and all human instincts rise up and show fight against the Divine force which threatens, or rather appears to threaten, its separated life. For the spiritual force awakens all these separative forms through which the I finds its expression—nay, vitalises them all the more. For their inner life, too, is the same life of the Spirit—for the Spirit is in the gambling of the gambler as well as in the virtue of the virtuous—the One Force vitalising all forms. The same sun which calls into being and fosters the highest forms of life in Nature, evokes into activity the lower also, even the forms of death and pestilence. In man too, as we find in daily experience, any accession of energy in any plane of being, vitalises all the forms which are connected with that plane. That is why a vivification of intellect energises also the lower part of a man's nature: that is why, as soon as a man longs to attain the spiritual sources of his being, the desires and other lower forms of life rise up and try to draw him down by accentuating the untransmuted lower nature. So also when a man becomes a disciple, and comes under the influence of the White Lodge—the Other Side puts forth all its strength to bring him down. Thus the entire lower nature—the lower man whose life is one of separation—rises up in rebellion against the higher and the universal part of his being, and the lower self so controls his whole being that his virtues, his intellect and every thing impersonal, fall away from his grasp, and he is in the utter darkness of apparent non-existence. The state of man, “like unto a little kingdom, suffers then the nature of an insurrection” and his whole lower nature—not his animal nature, but rather the *human* one—rises up against him and the mastery of the Divine Self. The lower self, bent on securing a separated existence

for itself, so subtly and yet so powerfully dominates his judgment, that it is impossible to know where duty and sacrifice lie. Then and then only does he come to realise the nothingness of the individualised self in him. Then and then only does he come to know of the human self as nothing compared to the Divine Source from which it sprang, the Divine of which it is a mere reflection. Therefore is it that the Ego is asked to stand aside and let the Warrior—the Charioteer—the Guide—fight in the man; for, as the whole Mahābhārata will show, the actual warrior is really and truly the Lord standing as the dispassionate witness, the simple Charioteer of Arjuna. So the valiant Arjuna, the hero of a thousand battles, the son of Indra, the great *Nara*, in despair and despondency, like a helpless baby, is perplexed and despondent in the midst of the warring forces. Happily for him, from his bleeding and lacerated heart now wells up the prayer—"My heart is weighed down with the vice of faintness, my mind confused to all Dharma. I ask Thee which may be better; that tell me decisively. I am Thy disciple, suppliant unto Thee. Teach me."* This prayer, not lip-deep as before, this complete self-surrender of the immortal man to the Divine, this recognition by the heart of the supremacy of the Spiritual Self, forges the last link in the chain of the sixfold virtues which binds us to the Guru, who is Iswara. This prayer of the human self, the soul whose "feet are now washed with the blood of the heart," this complete renouncing of all Dharmas, this final falling back upon the Self of all as the only refuge, this final union of the *Nara* and *Narayana*, which in the words of the sage *Sanjaya* is the guarantee of the final victory of the human self, goes up to the Divine. And now, and now only, does the soul get the loving guidance of the Logos, and from the Divine comes a down-

* Gītā, II. 7.

pouring of spiritual life and energy which unifies the discordant forces in the man ; from the Divine pours in the sweet melody of the Song of Life, the Eternal Gîtâ, the Harmony of Love which synchronises the jarring forces in the bodies of the man ; the Supreme Melody, which opens the eye of the now divine man to the one Life, Consciousness and Love, which unifies the Lokas and the Talas, the high and the low, the virtuous and the vicious, dharma and sin, knowledge and ignorance, attachment and dispassion—the ineffable harmony of the One.

Verily—

“Happy the Kshattriya who gets struggles like these.”

CHAPTER II.

CASTE CONFUSION.

ONE of the arguments which the desponding Arjuna adduces against the fight, one of the principal arguments, is that of caste confusion. It runs thus :—that the war means a wholesale slaughter which causes loss of dharma through its being neglected, which again leads to *adharma*, in its turn vitiating the women, and the women being thus demoralised, it leads to confusion of caste. Thus we see that, according to Arjuna, loss of dharma, or, translating it in modern terms, the conflict of duties, gives rise ultimately to the deterioration of castes. It will not therefore be amiss if we try to understand how such a thing can come to pass, and in the present stage of our evolution, when we Hindus are quickly freeing ourselves from the so-called trammels of the caste system, such an enquiry is fruitful of momentous issues bearing on the spiritual regeneration of India. Here I would ask my readers to accept the fundamental proposition, that all physical and individual things have got a spiritual basis, that, by right understanding of the forces at work in the individual, we can get at a correct appreciation of the forces as affecting nations, for the individual is the product of the national Karma and heredity, and is at the same time the moulder of national destiny, and is thus in every way intimately connected with the destiny of the nation, being, so to say, a mirror which

reflects, as well as the indicator which discloses, the workings of forces on the nation.

Let us therefore try to understand what caste is, and find if there is any relation whatever between caste and duty. The Lord in the Bhagavad Gîtâ* describes caste or colour as being due to *Guna* and *Karma*. These form the differentiating factors in the division of castes. The caste is thus the expression in the lower planes of the karmic heredities and the inner qualities evolved by the Ego. In other words, in a normally healthy Society there is always a fixed rule governing the stages of individual growth, dependent on the qualities and limitations of the individual.

If we study the origin of the individual we find something which helps to clear the ground for us. The individual, or, as it is sometimes called, the individualised Self, as it starts into existence, is a white spark of the Divine Light enclosed in a colourless film of matter. It is a spark emanating from the Divine Flame and having all the qualities of the parent involved in it. This seed is cast into the soil of the phenomenal planes, that it may grow into the likeness of its sire. As regards the Spark of Light, *per se*, it is the same Divine Light everywhere—it is always of the substance of what is called in the Gîtâ, the Daivi Prakriti.

From the stand-point however of this Light, there is no differentiation nor evolution ; we cannot posit any beginnings in Time to it, for It ever is. We must therefore seek for the root of evolution elsewhere.†

Though in *essence* it is colourless at the beginning, yet in its *actual* manifestation some change takes place. The Divine spark can only reach the matrix of matter through some intermediate agencies, Rays of the Light, who are called the Sons of Mind. The Divine Light, in manifesting the Universe from the state of *pralaya*, acts on the vehicle

* Gîtâ, IV. 13.

† Gîtâ, II. 20.

of matter not directly, but rather through what we may term definite "rays." These rays, or the pencils of the Light, catch up the image of the Logos of a system and mirror It in the various *upadhis*. The characters of these rays are different and so too their functions. Thus the rays energising and vivifying the matter of a cosmos into several planes of matter of varying densities are sometimes spoken of in Theosophical literature as the First Life-Wave. So, too, the Devas who superintend the building of forms and the fashioning of the tabernacle of man come out of the Second Life-Wave. When the tabernacle is ready, then there is again a downpouring from the Logos called the Third Life-Wave. It is the birth of the individual.

Now if we look carefully into the Shastras, we find that this incoming of the man, or rather the building of the vehicle of individuality, is caused by the action of those Rays of the Divine Light—known in the Theosophical terminology as the Sons of Mind, the Manasaputras of Brahma. These Mighty Beings of a past *Kalpa* having evolved their individual *upadhis*—having attained to individuality—become the channels by which the one Divine Light becomes individualised for the purposes of evolution.

Each of these great Sons of Mind has His own individual characteristics. As the perfect Man, He is seven-fold in nature, yet having for His basic principle one particular principle so to say, in which the others come in and inhere without disturbing the basic harmony. The basic harmony is expressed by a particular sound, colour, and other correspondences. The basic colour may thus be called the colour of the Ray when in manifestation. When these Primary Rays sub-divide the basic colour is not disturbed, while the other principles come in, in a slightly different degree, yet without disturbing the harmony. These great Beings, who had in the previous Kalpas evolved mind and

consciousness, who had even attained to spiritual bliss in the full consciousness of a *gnanin*, are thereby made the link to connect the spiritual spark and the material bodies, the bridge to connect matter with Spirit. So we read in the Yoga Vashistha how They went to visit the Logos, and how in the pride and consciousness of Their spiritual freedom, They refused to make Their obeisance to Him—and how They were cursed to incarnate in man and to furnish him with well-ordered and well-stocked mental bodies—with the forms and laws of thought. It is they, the Higher Pitris, who furnish the out-breathed human monads with what is known as the causal body. These beings are likened to the seven colours into which the one white light is refracted in passing through the prism of the Buddhi principle. Distinct individual characteristics which are thus imparted to the causal bodies of the out-breathed monads, impart to these bodies, made of the delicate film of the causal matter, the soft lines of differentiation. The colours of the causal body thus furnished are indicative of the lines of least resistance, so to say, the lines along which the spark may best develop its latent powers. The astrological planets governing a man's life are but other names for the influences of these seven Lords of Light, and these signify the nature, the arrangement and balance of the principles in that particular earth-life. This colour is thus the spiritual *plasm*, the basis of spiritual heredity of the spark coming into existence, and, as already said, defines the limits of growth, the lines of action and so forth, of the inner man. It is, so to say, the key-note of that man's life, all other notes being blended with it in such a way as to produce harmony. As differentiation proceeds, the basic colour is played upon by the colours of the other principles, giving rise to infinite variety and play of colours, without disturbing the basic harmony. We can understand

this by the analogy of music with its seven principal notes. Now in Indian music we have six manifested Ragas or principal tones (with one unmanifest), each having its own characteristic marks. The Ragas sub-divide into sub-tones called Raginis, each having distinctive marks of its own and yet having some thing to connect it with the original Raga from which it sprang, while differing in external form and even in notes and sub-notes. The subtle harmony which exists between the Raga and the Raginis is not ordinarily perceived; the basic identity is generally overlooked by the commonplace musician who notes more the external forms than the inner essence. As the *Ragas* become differentiated into *Raginis*, the basic harmony is undisturbed, but within its limits the other notes are arranged in diverse ways, giving rise to various melodies, having still for the basic harmony the characteristic of the original Raga. The Raginis themselves can be interblended to produce further variety, by the arrangement of the notes and sub-notes in infinite ways, yet resulting always in harmony.

So also in the case of man. The Hindus are familiar, though without troubling themselves much as to their real import, with what are called the *Gotra* and the *Prabara*, of the individual. Thus every one has got a *Prabara*, the root colour of his being, depending, as is exoterically known, upon the particular planetary god, but really on the particular ray from the Central Sun. This root colour then differentiates, within the limits of harmony, till a particular Rishi is reached, who is the source directly of the *spiritual plasm* in man, and along whose lines the individual must travel in order that the goal may be reached with the least possible dissipation of energy. This is, as may be guessed, what is called the *Guna* of the individual and defines the law of growth of the individual up to the causal body.

This is why, when a man has outgrown the limitations of the causal body, when he reaches the *Paramahansa* stage, that he gives up the characteristic caste marks ; and this is also why, when thus fit to step out of the *kârana sharira*, he is transferred from one ray to another, in order that he, now developed in strength and balance, may assimilate the qualities of every other ray, and thus pass again into the white light of the sun from which he has emerged, enriched with the fruitage of evolution. Nature never works *per saltum*—all her works are sequential.

Thus far, then, as concerning the *Guna*. And now we will consider the other element, the *Karma* of the individual. *Karma* is the expression of Life in a given plane. It is thus the order, arrangement and harmony between the six remaining principles, which express the inner life of the Individual. It is the expression of that life in terms of the remaining principles. As in music the coming in of the secondary notes and sub-notes help the swell, and form the cause of harmony of the Raga or the Ragini, just as these notes and sub-notes help in the differentiation of the one Raga into myriads of secondary Raga and Raginis,* nay, just as the harmonious arrangement of the notes helps in what the musician would call the portraiture and the expression of the Raga, so also the arrangements of the principles help in the differentiation of the Individual Root into various sub-groups—species and individuals. Speaking again in the terms of astrology, the Karmic element is symbolised in the co-ordination of the other principles. As in music, the secondary notes are necessary for the purpose of producing by their harmonious arrangement a grander harmony, a sweeter melody than would be possible with the dull monotony of a single note, so also in any individual incarnation, the secondary principles are always

* Raga and Ragini are technical terms in Hindu Music.

so arranged as to produce a harmony best suited to the individual, and adapted best to the true expression of the real life. We have in astrology the Primary Ray—under which a man is born—the natal planet, as well as other planets occupying different houses. The primary planets give the *Guna* of the individual—while the arrangement of and places occupied by other planets show the order and comparative motive power of the remaining principles. The primary planet connects him with the spiritual source of his being, while the order and arrangement of the others express the stage of evolution, the capacities evolved, and in short the *Karma* of the individual. The harmonious arrangement of the planets helps towards the manifestation of the inner Life according to the lines of least resistance evolved in the past, and thus helps further the differentiation of the individual Ray. Thus several people may have the same primary planet as their natal star, yet it is the arrangement of the remaining ones that expresses their lives as individuals. This arrangement and order of the secondary planets show the karma of the individual, show forth to a mind properly trained the physical, mental and higher potentialities, as well as even the occurrences of a man's life. They are indicative as to the quality, power and capacities of the different bodies of the man, and thus help in the harmonious expression of the inner life in terms of these bodies.

It may here be noted in passing that even in the forms of initiation by the family *Guru* prevalent amongst the Hindus, a man's horoscope is cast and the order and powers of the secondary planets are calculated ere he is given the *mantram*. Each family has a special *mantram*, but the form of the *mantram* depends upon the order and arrangement of the secondary planets of the individual. Limitation as this may appear to be to many, yet in reality such limitations are

necessary for the truest expression of the inner life ; and they further serve the Man within as instruments of growth by furnishing him with ready-made appropriate vehicles for the manifestation of the inner life.

Thus we have got, over and above the original colouring of the Causal Body, the Body of the individual man formed of the matter of the *Arupa* levels of the mental plane, the colours reflected in that body, the colours of the principles evolved by the man and the improvements in powers corresponding to the principles. As body after body disintegrates, as principle after principle is resolved into latency, the colouring matters are handed on to the Auric Egg, where they remain in a latent state as karmic seeds from which will spring forth at the re-awakening of the Ego its lower principles and bodies ; and hence it is that the Auric Egg is also called the Causal Body. All the powers evolved, all co-ordinations gained in an earth-life are thus preserved as colours playing through the Causal Body. The synthesis of all these when manifested in the lower planes as powers of consciousness, is what can be really and truly called the colour of the Individual, his caste. A well-developed Causal Body, it may be here mentioned, is a gorgeous thing with the loveliest tints flashing through it, a thing of supernal glory ; while at the lower stages it sometimes appears as a mist, loose and unstable, with no life force manifesting—an inchoate something rather than a definite organism. The Astrological *varna* or caste (literally *colour*), which differs sometimes from the physical caste of the man, is also the result of the arrangements of the planets, and varies with their order and development. Facts thus revealed by up-to-date astrology are pregnant with momentous issues if pondered over. The infinite subdivisions of castes, which we find in the India of to-day, are, we may say in passing, the result of necessities of evolution

towards specialization of the individual. The sharper the lines of demarcation between the upadhis, which are, as we know, the wombs of evolution, the more individualized is the Divine centre. Just as in the case of man we have got individual higher-selves taking the place of the group souls of the animal period, so too the infinite sub-divisions of castes are necessary for the evolution of the infinite variety of individuals. So long as the Egos dwelling in these upadhis require differentiation, so long in a healthy scheme of evolution there must be furnished individual upadhis for the specialization of the Life. If we consider again the class of Egos that are usually found in India, if we take into our calculation the extreme infancy of the individuals, we should pause ere speaking against the prevalent caste distinctions. It must however be conceded that evolution during the returning arc must be based more and more upon increased harmony between the individual units—that voluntary and harmonious expressions due to the recognition of the One Life as pervading all must take the place of specialization and narrowness. But this is always, as the lawyers would say, a question of fact and not one of principle. The stability of the individual centre must always precede its expansion.

We are now in a position to see how caste or *varna* is the result of the harmonious play of the principles of man, and the powers of consciousness evolved, having for their background, their basis, the colour of the particular ray, or, as we may say, taking the analogy of animal evolution, the colour of the Ego's monadic Group Soul. For evolution, the basic harmony must not be disturbed, the life of the basic spiritual plasm must not be endangered. It is thus the expression of as much of the Karma as can be harmoniously expressed in a given incarnation.

Now we must consider how conflict in duties affects the

expression of inner life, which as we have seen is truly called varna, colour or caste.

In the first place we must investigate the relation between the Ego and its duties—we must understand what is meant by duties.

As the colours and their play are the inner expression in the causal planes, so the duties are always the expressions of the inner life of the Ego which are harmonious with the workings of the Law and as such depend to a large extent upon the vehicles. They are the expressions of the line of Life along which growth is harmonious. Now action, though it may result from the qualities of the sheaths, has also a direct effect upon them. The interaction between duty and the vehicles of man are reciprocal actions; and even thoughts, as we know, help to draw around our bodies the matter best suited to their expression outward. They create and develop lines of activity.

Duties are the external symbols of the stage of evolution of the individual in the planes of action.* They are the expressions of the Sanskaras of previous births, the expression of the resultant improvements in the building up and development of the bodies effected in previous births, which indicate the lines along which the man must act in order that his evolution may go on without much loss of energy. In a healthy society they express in the outward planes the stage of evolution reached by the bodies, the qualities which the man can easily develop, and the shortcomings which he must overcome in order to make his nature harmonious. These duties thus express the powers of correlation and adaptation evolved in the form, powers which go to draw out the qualities and powers of the Ego. Thus the duties act as a sort of womb whereby the Ego is supplied with the materials of growth best suited to its stage of evolution,

* Gîtâ, XVIII. 41.

to the powers of the Self evolved in it, as well as to the nature of the materials and the colour of the causal body in which he lives. They further protect the nascent Ego from hostile vibrations in the external world, till the Ego is strong enough to dispense with such motherly limitations and thus to adjust itself to any and every vibration.

That being the case, the duties furnish the Ego with proper and suitable vehicles, in which it can function with advantage, and through which it draws from the external universe the food for the growth of self-consciousness in any plane—the food which, assimilated, strengthens the growing centre and enables it to know itself as separate from the plane in which the duties exist: for it is only through the assimilation of materials in the bodies that the power of self-consciousness can evolve.

The duties thus form the external basis of the expression of the life of the soul, just as the colour or varna signifies the inner powers evolved, and we can easily understand why there should be harmony between the two.

In olden days, when the power of individuality had not so developed, when the power of free choice, of going temporarily against the evolutionary current had not so much manifested, the wisdom of the Great Guardians of Humanity provided, even on the physical plane, bases for the rapid growth of the Ego. These physical bases were what are called the castes. The reincarnating Ego was drawn, according to its stage of evolution, into those grooves of social and national life where it could profit best, where its weaknesses were not exposed too much to the dangers outside, but protection was afforded by the properly built bodies with their physical, astral and mental associations, and yet where it could grow with the materials most suited to it. Thus a Kshattriya soul would get a body, fitted by long lines of growth and by the stage of evolution of what is

called by Weissman the physical plasm, in which were garnered all the improvements in the powers of co-ordination and adaptation effected in the physical body, the powers of response to proper external stimuli, evolved by other souls in preceding generations. The incarnating soul would thus get the most suitable of environments for its further growth, for bringing into activity its latent powers. The astral and mental associations would also be a great help in the same direction, and furnish the Ego with the lines along which its progress naturally lay.

Thus we have not only the individual vehicles with their potentialities but also the external rules, termed duties, which conduce to the proper building of the vehicles and the evolution of the Individual centre. The relation of the nascent centre of Individuality to the vehicles is that of the foetus to the womb. Like the foetus, the Ego can evolve if the vehicles are consonant to its stage of evolution. Hence it is that there must be harmony between man and his bodies on the one hand, and these bodies and the external world on the other. When, however, the body follows a different line of evolution—when there are built into it materials incongruous to the stage of the evolution of the Ego—when the body goes one way with its own lines of heredity and the Ego the other way, there is war and discord. There is then what the Gîtâ calls “Caste confusion”—when the vehicles of the man, instead of being instruments to express the inner life in a way most suited for growth (which is called duty), are vitiated by the effects of actions incongruous to the needs of the inner Man—when by such actions forms of matter of different planes hostile to the life of the Ego are drawn and built into the bodies, then these vehicles become polluted, or, as the Gîtâ puts it, “the women, being vitiated,”* there is what is

* Gîtâ, I. 40.

called the confusion of caste. The *Guna* of the individual cannot harmonise with the qualities of the bodies, and the whole state of man is thrown into commotion and suffers then the nature of an insurrection. Nor is this all. Lower orders of Egos come to be attracted by the vitiated bodies of the higher castes and take birth in them, thus corrupting the whole social fabric and killing out religion. The India of to-day is passing through such a crisis, and on the issues involved depends entirely the whole future of its people.

CHAPTER III.

THE REAL AND THE UNREAL.

THE very first step in the path of occultism—the very preliminary requisite without which the steep “razor path” may not be trodden at all—nay, the very gate-way to the Path that leads to Life and Power—is the discrimination between the Real and the Unreal, the Substance and the Phenomenon—the cognition and realisation of the self in man, the Individual as being the one reality in the midst of shifting surroundings and changing circumstances. This realisation of the nature of the human self as being divine in its essence and as such unaffected by the changes in the various vehicles—as the unchanging spectator of the workings of Prakriti—this notion of the distinction between the indestructible, permanent, individualised self in man and its food, the pleasures and pains of the personality, though dim, hazy, and undefined at the outset, is necessary ere the path of Wisdom and Bliss can be safely trodden. Without this realisation, even though dim and unconscious, man would go on identifying himself with his vehicles and their workings, considering these as parts of his being and essential to his existence and consciousness.

Action cannot avail. For by action, the inner I-notion is brought out into manifestation. The physical law of action and reaction holds good in all the planes of being, and the

I-notion which prompts actions is only accentuated thereby. Thus all actions have only the effect directly of rivetting the fetters of ignorance on the Ego, of accentuating the initial idea which led to the actions: Just as in the physical planes a thing is moved by a force acting on its own plane; so too, the actions which a man does with the idea of the physical personality as the centre from which these actions emanate and to which they converge, go directly to develop and feed the physical personality in the first instance. Thus all motives of self-improvement, in order to be effectual, must have their being in the knowledge of the Ego and the non-Ego. And it is only when there is an awakening of the inner life, though faint may be its pulsations and unrecognised by the brain-consciousness, that external aid comes to be recognised as useful. Teachings in the Shastras are useless, if the basis upon which they are built is not existent; lectures, sermons and homilies fall flat on ears as yet unable to discriminate between the eternal and the transitory. True progress means always an unfoldment from within; it is the adaptation of the inner man to the world external—the harmony of the inner with the outer. How often do we hear lofty thoughts embodied in the Shastras fall glibly from curious lips without leaving any trace on the inner man? How often do we meet with Pecksniffs and Micawbers and Malaprops in the field of religion, with many texts and much authority, yet reflecting nothing of these in the inner life?

The recognition of the phenomenal nature of things as opposed to the permanent centre of consciousness—of the permanent and unchanging Ego as against the fleeting non-Ego, indicates in some measure the age of the soul. It is only when the Ego has exhausted to a large extent the pleasures and pains of the personality, when the Ego has realised that these pleasures and pains, evanescent in their

nature, are like the Dead Sea fruits, beautiful to look at but ashes to the taste ; when, weary with the unceasing panorama of fleeting forces and ever-vanishing forms, the soul pants for the reality within ; when the strong vibrations of the external world have evolved the mind-body, now well stocked with experiences conflicting in their character, and thereby stimulating the Ego to seek out the unchanging substance in which these experiences have their play ; when the Ego, wooed out to seek for itself existence, consciousness and bliss in the phenomenal forms, sees the hollowness of things, then the realisation of the true life becomes a possibility. The Ego, mocked every way in its ardent search after the place of peace, seeks for Life and takes up forms which crumble at the touch, or at best shut out the life-within from mingling with the life-without. Repeated thirsts for sensation, repeated fiery unrest which comes of its cravings, followed by the blank void of satiety, if not by positive pain, make the Ego fall back upon itself as the last resort. A vague idea of the immensity of life in comparison with the pettiness and limited nature of sensations gradually impresses the soul. The obstinate questionings of sense and outward things, the fallings from us and vanishings in a world yet unrealised, the blank misgivings, and the dull satiety stimulate the quest after the reality. The Ego dimly feels that the peace and bliss which prompt it to activity cannot be got in outside things, that existence and self-consciousness depend not on things. The world of forms which attracted the Ego now appears unsubstantial—"of the fabric of dreams"—pleasures and pains appear as passing shows : *Swarga* even fails, for its pleasures too come to be recognised as impermanent.

Religion helps not, for, actuated by strong desires for possession, for grasping, the Ego tries by religion and worship, by rituals and ceremonies, to hold things in the name of God. It worships, it undergoes penances, with the object

of *Yoga* and *Kshema*, of gaining and retaining things, forgetting that the instinct of possession belongs to the non-Self. Its religion is but a masked representation of self-seeking ; its God, too, the mere externalisation of its inner nature, fails it in this crisis. Weary, tempest-tost, the sport of every devious wind, hammered on all sides, the intellect quickens and the man now awakes and wants to know the why and wherefore of things.

The outgoing tendencies which bring out and express, nay expand, the life of the Ego in terms of matter and form, the *kama* which stimulates the desire to seek itself in external *upadhis*, help, however indirectly, in the gradual manifestation of the Individual. The almost infinite expressions of this *kama* and attachment to forms, mistaking the broken images therein as the life, help to feed the I-notion by accentuating the duality of the Ego and Non-Ego, *meum* and *tuum*. And as form after form perishes, the inner life, deprived of the images created by the *upadhis*, is thrown back upon itself into the darkness of apparent non-being. But the thirst after the I, which prompted the desires, remains, and the Ego is forced by the very laws of its being, by the very desire of attaining to the realisation of its own existence and bliss, to seek for the expression of its life in the darkness. The mirror being broken, the very broken fragments, each of them, reflect the image. Thus we see that when the object on which our heart is fixed is broken, we find ourselves in the first place in a state of acute anguish, in darkness. But ere long we seek to people this darkness, this utter void, with beings of our own creation, and in the place of the object we hug the memory of it, and oftimes cherish the very anguish, the very bereavement and loss, seeking therein to reflect ourselves. This is why a bereaved mother lovingly dwells on the very thought of the loss of her only child, and the idea of misery, the memory of loss and

suffering, the void of despair, serve as a vehicle wherein the Ego seeks itself reflected. Truly pleasure and pain touch not even the fringes of the life of the Ego. Verily, there is a vitality in poison, a sustaining power even in the acutest anguish, and thus the heart will break and brokenly live on. In the process one thing is gained ; instead of the physical object the Ego learns to reflect itself in the abstract idea of pain, of loss and bereavement.

The multifariousness of the objects of desire too has a similar effect. Directly they help in the development and enriching of the mental and even higher bodies, by furnishing them with materials of growth. Indirectly, however, their use is greater. The changing desires, manifold as they are, imprison the one I-notion within their *astro-mental* forms, very often conflicting in their nature and object. These conflicting forms, built out of finer matter of the planes of desire and mentality, in fact the objective side of these subjective phenomena, are vitalised by the outgoing life-energy of the Ego and thus share in its life, and when rigid shut out the reflection of the Ego—the life within—from the life without. They thus form semi-automatic lives, semi-independent centres of consciousness in the field of consciousness of the one Ego. Thus every desire that a man seeks confines a part of his life within its folds, forming water-tight compartments in the consciousness of the divine Man. These rigid sub-divisions of the One Life, very often conflicting in their nature, disturb the one, uniform, stable and harmonised I-notion. Let us conceive a man in whom the higher impulses of generosity and self-sacrifice exist with, say, a desire for name and power. Naturally that man's notion of the I varies with the changes of circumstance. If there is an object which can arouse the higher nature, our man becomes unconsciously and in spite of himself a hero, sacrificing his pleasures for the sake of others. But if the lower impulses

attract, he becomes similarly, for the time being at least, identified with the personality. The I-notion which manifests when he is generous, rigidly shuts out the I-notion which comes into being when he is dominated by the lower impulses. Each of these notions, sharing as they do in the life of the Ego, is hostile to the others, and the result is disharmony and pain, and what is more, they break up the one uniform consciousness, till the Ego is thus forced to harmonise these jarring reflections of itself and synthesise them by resolving them into a higher form. Evolution is a history of this synthesising process. It is the gradual sublimation of the tiger and the ape in us for the manifestation of the Divine. The cultivation of virtues is also an example of this synthesising process. So also the development of the higher powers of abstraction and analysis. After a time these higher forms themselves conflict, and the Ego gradually develops still higher and higher points of union and more real harmony, until it reaches its own being.

The resultant effects in pleasure and pain also tend to disturb the *atomic* nature of the Ego, to throw out of order the perfect homogeneity of the divine substance. These, too, when crystallised into rigidity, have the effect of disturbing the innate harmony and one-ness of Life, and of dividing the Ego against itself, by creating, so to say, in its homogeneous substance the appearance of different *polarities* of being. Let us take a concrete example. We know that when a homogeneous substance is subjected to the play of two mutually conflicting forces, the result is that the homogeneous substance is thrown out of equilibrium and displays a tendency towards *polarisation*, whereby a part of it adapts itself to one of the vibrations, while the opposite pole responds to the other. If the vibrations are intensified, till their intensity passes the cohesive power of the substance, then the substance divides into two substances, distinct and

separate, which adapt themselves to the respective vibrations. This law lies at the basis of the differentiation of forms in the pre-human kingdoms in Nature, giving rise to genera, species, sub-species and individuals. In modern scientific parlance, this law is clothed in the garbs of "natural selection," "survival of the fittest," "environment" and so forth. The process of the gradual differentiation of the vegetable and animal group-souls is also an illustration to the point.

Normally, in the human kingdom, this division of the individuality into different centres of consciousness does not take place, although a particular body strongly energised may, as in the case of astral shells and *elementaries* in Kamaloka, lead for a time a quasi-independent life. The causal body is generally strong enough to bear the strain of conflicting forces. In abnormal cases, however, such disruption is possible, and is called in the Shastras *prakritric laya* and dissolution of individuality. But though such complete disruption is not normally possible, yet there is, so to say, a temporary imprisoning of the light of the Ego in a temporary form. In a manner the personality, as defined in the Theosophical literature, the lower quaternary, especially when hardened and crystallised into rigidity, is such a temporary outputting of the Ego. Perhaps even the individualised self, the Ego, is such a temporary manifestation of the One Divine Self.

But, though in the case of the personality and other phenomenal bodies there is no absolute disruption in the substance, yet the homogeneity of the Self is disturbed, and the One *atomic* Ego is thrown into a state of unstable equilibrium by the workings of the desires, and even of the higher forms of mentality, with the result that the personality is unconscious of the eternal homogeneous nature of the Individual, and knows itself to be a separate and distinct something. It knows itself not as the Eternal Man, the

Individualised self, which forms cannot confine nor bodies limit, and which, in the words of *Nachiketas*, "is separate from *Dharma* and *Adharma*, Cause and Effect,"* but whose existence and consciousness are as illimitable as the ocean. Thus, though there is no actual and complete separation in its substance, yet the one consciousness of the Ego getting imprisoned in forms and considering itself as a man in time and space, becomes self-limited. It says "I am happy," "I am miserable," and so forth, thereby imprisoning its divine life in myriads of tiny forms which merely go to help in the expression of its life, identifying itself with these and unable to find its true plane of being. Contacting these forms, the Ego thinks itself to be of them, in that thought building up barriers for itself, and imprisoning its free energy in the dimensions of Space and modifications in Time—shutting off its divine powers gradually till it comes to know itself as a thing of clay.

Such a state of things, however, cannot last. The Divine substance cannot be entirely lost in the forms. It seeks always to reach the source of its being, however hampered and weighed down it may be for the time. The confining of the consciousness in the rigid forms impregnates matter with the qualities of the Self, and thus helps later on in preparing the instruments for its upward evolution. The gain of Matter thus makes the building of higher vehicles possible, and the stability of the vehicle re-acts upon the Ego, and evolves a higher I-notion. The inner buoyancy of the Ego, helped by the Divine force underlying evolution and manifesting through the forms of *Avatars* and the Great Brotherhood, prompts it to rise above the limitations imposed by the forms. Thus suffering comes, and the Ego to maintain itself has to put out energies of a higher character, in order to enlarge the narrowness of the individuality and harmonise

* Katopanishad, II. 14.

the conflicting forms and centres of consciousness by taking refuge in its impersonal divine nature, setting free the imprisoned life, now manifesting as Wisdom and Love illimitable, for the helping of humanity. It gains in balance and longs to reach its permanent and eternal nature. There all these opposite and conflicting forms can inhere, harmonised and well adjusted, without disturbing the equilibrium and the clear vision of the soul, just as in the Sacred Ganges *pūja* flowers and fetid carrion float alike without polluting the sacred waters. It is then, as the Gîtâ * says, like the mighty ocean whereinto flow thousands of rivers of desire and mentality, of knowledge and devotion, of action and inaction, without causing so much as a ripple, without disturbing ever so little its calm serenity and majestic grandeur.

It is when this One Eternal Atomic Human Monad—this I, undisturbed by the play of forces—this calm spectator of the *prakritic* drama, is dimly and unconsciously sensed, when it is perceived as the one and unchangeable, though apparently changing and multiplying, when in the language of the *Upanishad* it is seen as—“The Self moves, yet It moves not: It is far, yet It is near: It is within this all, yet It is without (all these forms)” ; † it is when this I is dimly sensed as pervading all actions, words, and thoughts, and yet limited by none of these, that the true knowledge, the real discrimination between the Eternal and the Transitory becomes possible. This *Viveka* is necessary ere the path can be trodden.

This recognition of the Atomic Human Self as against the passing forms, this re-establishment of harmony in the Ego even when in the midst of warring desires and virtues, emotions and intellections, through the transcendental apperception of *Buddhi* forms the thesis of the Second

* Gîtâ, II. 70.

† Isopanishad, V. 5.

Chapter of the Gîtâ—the *Sankhya Yoga*—producing a true sense of proportion, a higher balance and a divine harmony.

Verily, Yoga is harmony, for as the *Upanishad* has it:—
“Where is illusion, where is sorrow for one perceiving this unity of Life”—this supreme harmony? *

* *Isopanishad*, 7.

CHAPTER IV.

THE REAL AND THE UNREAL. (*Continued.*)

THE discrimination between the Real and the Unreal in Man, between the *atomic* Human Self with its triple aspects and the molecular bodies through which it works, being thus the key-note of the Second Chapter of the Gîtâ, let us now proceed to understand how in the terms of our ordinary consciousness this distinction is gradually realised. The Human Monad, or, as it is sometimes termed in Theosophical literature, the Higher Self, has for its triple aspects Existence, Bliss and Consciousness, otherwise spoken of as Atma, Buddhi, and Manas respectively, or in the terms of our Indian Philosophies—Chit, Ananda and Sat, in the order of their natural unfoldment, which is the reverse of the order given above.

They may be called the reflection in Man of the three-fold *Shakti* (power and mode of functioning) of the Paramatma.

The sense of the I, the Ego, in man is due to the reflected image in him of the Centre in the Cosmos—the Centre which is everywhere and has its circumference nowhere—or in other words, the Logos.

To the abstract consciousness, this I is separable from its manifestations in the various vehicles. It is the *sutrâtma* wherein these broken and coloured images of itself inhere.

This Human Self—this Divine image—this potentially Divine fragment—is so to say cast into the waters, the womb, of *Prakriti* in order that the spark may develop into the likeness of its parent by the nourishment, the fuel, of the vibrations of the external world of what are called the *Prakritic* planes.

This I, the Self of man, has been compared to the sacred flame, burning ever in the heart, the means of attaining to immortality. It is the fire of which the *Kathopanishad* speaks.*

It is the Sacred Fire—the Flame which lies at the point of interaction of the threefold lines of evolution, which grows through the action of these three and which is fed and nourished by the food supplied by the three life-waves—successively producing Matter, Form and Individuality. So the Upanishad says:—"He who has got this Flame—which comes out of the union of the three, who gathers this flame thrice and who does threefold action—he transcends life and death—and knowing (realising) the Deva who arises out of Brahman, and who is omniscient and worthy of worship—the divine Monad—the Self in man gets extreme peace." †

Identifying itself with the forms, its growth lies at first in the harmony between itself and the particular form for the time being. Hence naturally it comes to know itself during the earlier stages in and through the vehicles—the *upadhis* for its becoming. The images of itself cast upon the mirrors of *Prakriti* are thus regarded as being itself.

With its inner divine powers undeveloped, it can know itself only through the medium of the images; and the very attachment to the reflected life in and through the forms seems to develop the I-notion and make it more stable. Later on by the disharmony between the vehicles and the

* Kathopanishad, I. 14.

† Kathopanishad, I. 17.

reflecting centre, between the eternal Man and his images, the Ego is thrown back upon itself and dimly senses the phenomenal nature of the *upadhis* and the broken images cast thereon as compared to the Ego itself. The constant unchanging sense of the I as the one unvarying factor in the midst of changing forms and evanescent powers, the dim and unconscious realisation of the one substratum of all actions, feelings and thoughts, the one play-ground of conflicting forces, is the sign of the growing *chit* or thought aspect in man, of the development of the powers of discrimination and *viveka*.

This stable I-notion is, as we can see by calm analysis, very difficult of attainment, being the result of long lines of evolution in the past. Thus in the earlier stages, the stability of the physical body, nay, its very rigidity, coupled with the association of ideas as regards physical heredity, family, caste, and so forth, helps by re-action to bring out and develop a stable I-notion. Hence the larger the number of things in which the incipient I-notion can reflect, and the more changing the surroundings the quicker the development. The laws of *Association*, of *Contiguity*, of *Difference*, all tend to develop the I-notion with the help of relatively permanent vehicles.

Unable to know itself as the I, the Ego learns at first to know itself as such mediately through the kindly intervention of these *Upadhis*, like the baby knowing itself through the help of a mirror. Hence the persistence of the vehicle through pleasure and pain, through sunshine and shower, goes to draw out and manifest the sense of its own permanence in the Ego. In other words, it helps in developing its self-consciousness in terms of the matter of the plane in which the body is. This is why a chequered life even on the physical plane, with its heights of joy and depths of despair, helps more to generate a sense of the

reality of the inner factor as against the passing forces, than a life of smooth sailing under halcyon skies.

Then again, the stages through which the body passes, together with its general stability of form—the stages of infancy, childhood, adolescence, youth, manhood, old age, decrepitude and senility—re-act upon the dweller in the body and stimulate the intelligence. While the idea of personality continues the same, as John Brown or Ram Hari, the forms change; and between the two is generated a sense of *Vairagya*, dispassion, and the inner man thus dimly feels that the changes belong not to him, for they are impermanent, while the personality remains apparently the same. Thus it is that a long life, varied as it must needs be with changing surroundings in the shape of pleasures and pains, of thirst and satiety, of attachment and bereavement, helps in the manifestation of a larger I-notion implanting the seeds of true wisdom. So it is said :—“Performing thus the works (enjoined by the Shastras) let one desire to live for hundred years.”*

The changing pleasures and pains, too, have a similar effect. Pleasures are the results of harmony between the vibrations or activities of the higher bodies of the Ego and the external forms and forces.† They lie at the points of contact of these two sets of forces. They lie in adaptation and consonance. The vibrations of the external world, containing embryonically all higher forces, fall upon the *upadhis* and evoke similar vibrations in these, thereby stimulating them into activity and thus building them up as organisms in the first place, and then creating lines of communication between these bodies and the lower ones, through which the vibrations are sent inwards and which also become channels for the expression of the Ego's life. The law of the utilitarian philosophies—that pleasure means an accession of energy—is more true than is generally imagined. The harmony between the two

* Ishopanishad, 2.

† Gîtâ, II. 14.

vehicles, their unison evolves connecting-links between them and the Ego whose nature is of *Ananda*. Bliss is thus drawn out by the sense of harmony, and the Ego—mistaking the artificial for the real—pours itself into it, seeking expression without, accentuating thereby the effects. The danger of the aspirant in taking the lower forms of *ananda* for the real, which is responsible for the sudden downfall of many an ardent soul thirsting for the inner bliss and harmony, has its origin in this tendency, in this mistake.

Then the Ego—finding these vibrations helpful to the expression of the life within—gradually identifies itself with them and avoids those of a contrary character. Thus are formed the astral and mental *upadhis*, with their specific lines of vibration—gradually becoming more and more stable as regards form, and more and more special and individualised as regards the qualities evolved, till at last they become rigid, confining the life of the Ego within them, pinning it to the lines of least resistance generated, and shutting out other vibrations. Then comes pain, and throws into disturbance the artificial harmony evolved, and the Ego is forced to seek out a higher harmony and bliss comprehending all these conflicting vibrations. It goes deeper within these forms of pleasure and pain, and finds in these and through these hitherto final facts of consciousness a finer substratum of Being, which is constant amidst the flux and efflux of emotions and thoughts, and which therefore synchronises these apparently conflicting forms of vibrations into a harmony of a higher nature.

The very first stage in this important direction is, as the *Gîtâ* says, the dim knowledge, born of repeated vivification of the bodies due to pleasure, and the forced indrawal caused by pain. Hitherto the Ego regarded these pleasures and pains as final facts—as things *per se* reflecting its life. The very pursuit of pleasures, even at the cost of health and

the general discomfort of the body so often observable in Society-life, shows that the body is coming to be regarded as the phenomenal instrument of the Inner Man. Now the man has to find out the phenomenal nature of the pleasures and pains—to find out that these two are not things *per se*, but merely the effects in consciousness of the interaction between the desire-body with its lines of vibrations and the external forces. By repeated experiences he finds that the very things which under one set of circumstances give rise to pleasurable feelings, will under different circumstances generate pain. He finds a particular thing pleasurable and pours his life into it till the limit of harmony is passed, and he finds his search, the thirst after the thing, ending in pain. He is confused and knows not the why, till the experience often repeated awakens memory. Reason begins to play on these images and he gets a dim conception of another law—that things external are not of themselves pleasurable, or otherwise, but that the potentiality of the body is an important factor. In other words, he realises that pleasures and pains do not lie in objects, nor in the bodies, but rather in the effects produced on the bodies—that when there is a harmony of vibration between the thing and the capacity of a particular body, the result is pleasurable ; otherwise pain results. He finds that the bodies have definite ranges of vibrations, and that all those things whose vibrations are consonant with these vibrations of the *upadhi* are pleasurable, and that those things whose vibrations are incongruous to and exceed this limit give rise to pain and discord. In short, he sees that pleasures and pains lie at the points of contact ; they spring out of the resultant harmony or otherwise between external forces and the organism. He begins dimly to realise, that just as sensations are not felt really at the point of interaction of the organism and the object, but in the brain, and just as the sensation is projected

outwards and thus made to appear externally in things, so too all our pleasures and pains are really felt within, but ascribed by the action of Maya to external things, and that real pleasure or *ananda* lies and has its being in the Soul itself, but because of the outgoing tendency it is projected outwards and located in the phenomenal non-Ego. The ignorant Soul—like the musk-deer, seeking the source of the scent, which emanates from its own body, in external things—gropes on in the outer regions to get at a thing which has its being within himself. He then sees the source of *ananda* within, he sees that pleasure and pains are merely the two poles of this *ananda*, seeking to realise itself in external things and thereby imposing upon itself the limitations which appear under different circumstances as pleasure and pain.

Thus by repeated pain, which throws the Ego back upon itself, comes the slow recognition of the phenomenal nature of things of the bodies and of the pleasures and pains appertaining thereto. By pain, it dimly senses that the pleasures and pains, however necessary they may be for the expressions of life, are not necessary to its existence as the I, for it feels the I in it remaining the same, though pleasure and pain may vary. It evolves thus the quality of forbearance, by which it tries to keep itself above the fierce torrents of phenomenal pleasures and pains which threaten to drown and submerge its self-conscious existence. If we analyse this forbearance, we shall find as the essential ingredient thereof this desire of maintaining the self-consciousness of the thinking centre and of keeping it unaffected by the forms, however attractive, of the pleasures and pains of a particular vehicle. By this inner struggle for self-adjustment, the germs of knowledge as to the phenomenal nature of things are evolved and brought into manifestation. Titiksha shows that the Ego is putting forth some of its newly-acquired powers to maintain

itself amidst adverse circumstances ; it shows that instead of swimming with the current of circumstances, the Ego has just begun to take its own evolution into its own hands instead of being dependent upon extraneous checks to effect it.

This forbearance, this self-imposed restraint put upon the mind and the senses by the Ego, is thus the *sine quâ non* of true discrimination. Without this it would be at the mercy of every vibration and carried away by the fierce torrents of sensation. It is a separative force as opposed to the innate love for sensation and the cravings for externalising self-consciousness in the phenomenal desires. Without this restraint, this indrawal of the Ego, no knowledge of the forces working in the external world is possible. Just as a child, suffering from and carried away by an acute physical pain, cannot know of its nature and character and cannot even locate it correctly in order to help in the treatment, much less take the initiative in gaining balance by itself, so too the soul, dominated by this love of sensation, has no leisure, no standing-ground to know and to discriminate. It is completely mastered by sensations of pleasure and pain, and, engrossed in the sensations, cannot know the causes which lie behind such sensations. Overpowered by the sensation of the moment, it does not know the why and wherefore of these apparently final facts of consciousness. It cannot dive into its own nature to realise the meaning of such phenomena, their bearings on evolution, and their place in the economy of Nature. Even when directed to control, it is helpless and cannot profit by such direction. So is it said : " Kill out the desire for sensation. But learn from sensation and observe it, because only so can you commence the science of self-knowledge and plant your foot on the first step on the ladder." * The Ego carried away by sensation is too much immersed in it to learn and to observe.

* *Light on the Path*, 7-8.

By *titiksha*, forbearance, whether springing from self-consciousness or from taking refuge in a higher form or ideal, we are able to see ourselves as separate from pleasure and pain, and being thus freed from the trammels thereof, can view the situation more correctly and thus gain in knowledge. Hence the very first step which the Gîtâ * enjoins on the aspirant after the Life is to try to forbear. To be able to see, implies that we are able to some extent to bear things without flinching. We must separate ourselves ere we can see; we must be free to some extent from *kama* ere the power of sight comes. For it comes only when we have set ourselves free from *kama*, from the sense of egoism. In other words, it comes when, as it is pithily put, we are "incapable of tears." † The effect of *kama* and "egoism" is to refract the light and make us see things in a way suited to and agreeable with the sense of personal attachment. As in a mirage the refracting medium causes the enlargement of even the minutest things in a way which is out of proportion to their real nature, and, what is more, produces false images of things, so too this sense of *kama*, this attachment to personal life, this personal factor in the equation, distorts correct perception and shows us things not as they are, but as they appear refracted through that medium. The senses themselves, in spite of their limitations, are not the real impediments to correct vision, but it is really by the action of this *kama*, this subtle colouring of the personality, that the diversity in our percepts and concepts is caused. It imparts to every object the separative hues of the personality, and thereby divides man from man.

It is this ascription of personal life to things, this *kama* and *egoism*, this colouring imparted by the mind, this superimposition of "mine" to things, this desire to see things in our own way, which lies at the root of pleasure and pain,

* Gîtâ, II. 14.

* *Light on the Path.*

fear and hatred, exaltation and depression. Therefore is it that the *Purusha*, who has controlled this refracting tendency due to "the moisture of life," is the one who can see *correctly*; he is not pained by the pairs of opposites, but developing *Buddhi* and always balanced in joy and sorrow, is capable of attaining immortality. For he can rightly discriminate between the real and phenomenal in Man; for by the elimination of the personal factor, he can see through the working of *Maya*, and gaining the true sense of proportion is not blinded by the accidents of forms, by the desire for personal stature.

Thus develops true discrimination, and with it true insight into the nature of things. With this discrimination, which by lulling the discordant elements in us produces correct vision; with this discrimination, which is not an *effort* but rather a *state* of consciousness, and which Kant has called the *transcendental apperception*, the Ego sees that it is not the bodies, nor is it affected by the energies in the bodies. With this *Viveka*, this opening of the eyes of the soul, the man can rightly discriminate between the false centres of consciousness created by the action of the *upadhis*—the physical and the astral man—and the real individual. He sees through the ephemeral nature of these false centres—the false I-s; he knows directly that the destruction of the vehicles cannot affect his own being—the one uniform consciousness which runs threadlike through the *mayavic* bodies and the artificial centres of consciousness reflected therein. He sees, not reasons. He sees that these reflections, transitory as they are, can never be the true measure of the Infinite and Immeasurable Ego, the Divine Man, and can never express fully the true nature and life of the Human Monad.

Knowing the true relation between the body and the eternal Man, he regards the vehicles of consciousness as

mere instruments for service, for expressing the Divine Life. Having intuited by discrimination his eternal nature, he grieves not at the body's decay, for he can dimly sense the One All-pervading Life and Consciousness which is constant amidst the play of forces and changes in forms—the cause of various I-notions in the several bodies and yet itself uncaused and eternal.

A dim and hazy conception of this I, the eternal Man, makes people seek to immortalise themselves in deeds and monuments, on tablets and urns. This notion of the one undying centre in us makes us crave for continuity of existence through the family, through the records of history. The vehicles being impure and unorganised cannot reflect this all-consuming Flame of Light; they cannot express in their limited and finite nature this Infinite Life. Yet its effects are often seen in lower things. The very attachment to the world of forms, to the bodies—the tendency to see ourselves reflected in these—the mistake in taking the broken images for the reality—are all significant of the presence of the Eternal Man in us. It is this Reality within which clothes all phenomenal things with a sense of reality and permanence. The clarified intellect, keen and penetrating, can in some measure pierce through the veils of *maya* and abstract the I-notion from the accidents—the fungus growth of forms—and by a supreme effort of constructive imagination can dimly sense the one Ego, the eternal Human Monad pervading the world of forms. The purified heart serving as a vehicle to the divine influence becomes the faithful ally of the intellect, as a touchstone to test the validity of the pronouncements of the intellect, and finally to transmute the light of the intellect which sees, into the Life which *is* and *manifests*.

CHAPTER V.

THE UTILITY OF FORMS.

IN the Gîtâ, Chapter II., we find some arguments which appear as being—more or less—out of keeping with the general exalted tone of the Divine Book. For example, we read: “Even having regard to your Dharma you should not give way, for to a Kshattriya nothing is higher than war for the sake of Dharma.”*

Again—“If you will not fight, then you will by abandoning Dharma and Renown get sin as the result.”†

Again—“If you die you will enjoy Swarga, and if you win you will enjoy the Earth,”‡ and so forth. We do not at once seem to grasp the fitness and bearing of exhortations like these upon the lofty theme of this Chapter, to wit, the Yoga of Rightful Discrimination. An enquiry as to the general effect of these teachings will thus be of some use to us—a general idea as to how these apparently flawed gems fit in with the superb structure of the Chapter will be a help to the mind.

In the first place, we ought to remember that the prerequisite of true discrimination between the Real and the Unreal, of the search after the Real in the midst of the phenomenal and the transitory, consists in the fact that there must be in the intellect a vague general notion of the

* Gîtâ, II. 31.

† Gîtâ, II. 33.

‡ Gîtâ, II. 37.

difference between these two. Without an inner and it may be unmanifest intuition of the Real, we cannot seek it in the outer world. Then, again, the harmony between the inner and the outer, so essential to all perceptions, is also the law underlying this dim cognition of the eternal element in man. A man sees beauty without only when he has a dim conception of beauty within. The man who has within him a sense of harmony can sense harmony in things. Perception is really an unfoldment of the inner Life—it is a refinding of the inner Verity, an externalisation of the Life within, in terms of the forms without.

But the inner life has stages of unfoldment of its powers. We know that the inner man, the I in us, is a reflection of the Logos, containing in it like unto a foetus all potentialities of being—we know that this infolded deity is the guarantee of man's immortality, this is the hidden force which alone makes for righteousness and evolution.

But the Hidden Deity is asleep. It can not respond in this infolded state to the Deity without. The Immanent can not respond to the External and the Transcendent. The latent powers of the spark need development—not *addition* but *manifestation*. The spark containing in *esse* all the qualities of the Flame is not the Flame but only its possibility.

So the Mundakopanishad (1-1-1) says:—

“As from a burning fire a thousand sparks of similar nature and character come out—so too, O gentle one! from the unchanging *Akshara Purusha* come out manifold beings and these merge into Him again.”

These sparks contain in potentiality all the qualities of the Parent Flame and are destined to re-become the Flame.

So too the sense of the Inner Reality, which as we observed lies in latency in every man and feebly sends out its

thrills, is the cause of our attachment to the bodies, the motive force which impels us to seek for continuous existence. It seeks its expression in and through forms which grow finer and finer as evolution proceeds. This innate sense of the reality of the Self within makes us clothe the bodies and external forms with a sense of reality. The very sense of the permanence of the world of manifestations is, as the opening *sloka* of the *Srimat Bhagavat* has it, due to the involution of the Self, the one Reality, the Iswara; and as we ascribe the reality of water to the phenomenal manifestations of the mirage, so this idea of the reality of things, the quest outwards for *ananda*, this desire for self-consciousness, is the result of the workings of the infolded Deity putting forth slowly Its energies for the realisation of Itself.

The efficacy of forms lies in their helping the unfoldment of the Life, in their wooing out the inner life of the Ego to mingle with the outer, the Immanent with the Transcendent, so that It may know Itself as Itself. Forms are therefore required to develop the Flame—forms relatively permanent in their nature. Discrimination thus implies some criterion, some standard whereby to judge and distinguish, and these forms serve the purpose of furnishing the ground whereon to stand, whereon to base the consciousness, till at last the Self is reached. Hence the necessity of these graduated Forms.

Thus the idea of one's own *Dharma*—thereby meaning the outer as well as the inner expression of the stage of evolution lying in front, and of virtue with its opposite—serves as vehicle of growth, with the help of which the stability of consciousness is effected and the evolution of the discriminating faculty is made possible. Thus the idea of a stable physical Ego serves as a basis for the foundation of discrimination, furnishing a standard whereby

to judge and a helping force wherewith to outgrow the more ephemeral forms of pleasures and pains. It thus serves as a base to which all things are related—offering a relatively permanent element in the midst of the fleeting desires and emotions. For a man will forbear from indulging in many things for the sake of the well-being of the physical body.

So do the ideas of physical heredity, of society, of virtue, act as vehicles wherewith to judge and discriminate. To the Ego in these forms, their stability, though impermanent when viewed from a higher standpoint, is helpful in evolving within it the latent powers of existence and permanence. For discrimination implies the resolution of relatively impermanent forms into a relatively permanent centre—it is the relation of the evanescent to the unchanging.

So too, a man born in a high and a religious family is helped in the growth of the intellect, and in the development of higher virtues, by the very notions of heredity. The family associations help him to throw off things incongruous to the family ideal. So also the ideas of reputation and prestige save many a man from sins to which otherwise he would have fallen an easy victim. This is why to the Ego which has a well-developed I-notion the very idea of disgrace is a great deterrent, even greater than death. So too the idea of the violation of the injunctions of the *Shastras*, even though they be the mere expression of an external law as opposed to the inner nature. They help in warding off many a hostile force, and serve the Ego as a womb within which the individuality with its growing discernment and wisdom can develop.

So much for the evolutionary value of the ideas of heredity, caste, etc. These institutions, which the wisdom of the Mighty Sages has implanted in a healthy society, are helpful to the growth of man, to the development of a stable

I-notion, to the evolution of the faculties of reasoning and discrimination, as well as the building up of the idea of brotherhood and unity. They woo out the inner life, help in its manifestation, and tend to develop and purify the I-notion, and furnish it with relatively higher vehicles of growth, of becoming.

CHAPTER VI.

SANKHYA YOGA.

WE are now in a position to understand the *Sankhya Yoga* as taught in Second Chapter of the *Gîtâ*. The cardinal principle, the one requisite for this *Yoga*, is Right Discrimination—the result of the eyes of the Soul opening through balance in the inner nature, and through the acquirement of a true sense of proportion among things. This right discrimination comes with the dim cognition of the Thinking Centre in man as distinct and separate from the vehicles of the Ego—the Higher Self, the Individual, the I as it is variously called—in contradistinction to its phenomenal images cast in the fields of the lower *upadhis*. It comes with the recognition, in thought at least, of an I in us which is unaffected by the changes in the bodies—the *Sankhya Purusha*, who is the “silent watcher” of the workings of *Prakriti*.

So the *Gîtâ* * says—“Balanced in pleasures and pains, in gain and loss, in victory or defeat, fight on. This is the true *Buddhi* in the *Sankhya*—with the help of which you will be able to free yourself from the bonds of action.”

This *Sankhya Yoga*—or the Realisation of the nature of the Individualised Self in man, the *Human Monad*—comes only when, through right discrimination between the

* *Gîtâ*, II. 38-39.

Real and the Unreal, through keen and well balanced analysis of the contents of consciousness in any plane of being, the one Ego pervading the bodies and yet unaffected by them, is dimly sensed. With people unable to extricate the I-notion from the actions of the non-Ego, who have not developed this sense of the Ego, the feeling of I is dependent upon the vibrations in the bodies. It rises and falls with these. Pleasure accentuates, while pain depresses its expression. But if we look deeper into these phenomenal manifestations, if we can eliminate the colourings of the vehicles, we shall see that in pleasure and pain, in happiness or misery, it is always there—the substratum of all these mental states, the source of their being. We can then see it as pervading the senses and the mind—as that by which alone the sense vibrations are cognised as such.

Nay more. We see it then as enveloping all the various states of consciousness. It is the *Purusha* of the size of a thumb residing in the heart, the ordainer of the past and the future, the One Self which manifests variously, yet always remaining the same, the Divine Man evolving His powers in Time and Space through many forms, the One Flame whose reflections in the lower vehicles produce phenomenal I-notions in the *upadhis*.

Long lines of past evolution in thought and virtue, the growth of the intellect and the development of the higher moral nature are necessary ere the Eternal Man can manifest himself in the lower consciousness. Repeated identifications with its broken images followed by the darkness caused by pain and the breaking of the vehicle; development of the powers of intellect which can penetrate through the illusion of forms, long and steady training in the powers of abstraction and concentration, steadfast practice of relinquishment and self-abnegation, all these are necessary ere the Higher Self of man can be even dimly cognised.

Mediately, however, the existence and presence of this All Pervading I is oftentimes seen. For example, what is the character of the I, which, passing through structural and material changes in the physical body from birth to death, is still the I? What is that I, which, though the playground of a thousand and one varying pleasures and pains which affect us, is still able to hold its own as the I? What is that I which pervades the stages of ignorance and wisdom, mental joy and travail, exultation and anguish, still remaining as the I? What is that I which connects the various workings of consciousness into a harmonious whole, in spite of the medley in percepts and concepts and the conflicting actions of the various laws of the mind—which further runs through the sleep and *shushupti* stages and yet remains the one without the second, the I?

With the awakening of intellect such questionings arise and press for solution—till through actions done with the object of attaining to such knowledge, the vehicles are made organic and stable as regards form, and delicate and refined as regards their materials. They become more and more purified of dross by the cultivation of the Sixfold Virtues, as well as by the longings for Self-realisation, and are thus made perfect *upadhis*, wherein something of the true nature of the Ego is mirrored. This is why in the Second Chapter of the *Gîtâ*, while speaking of the one and unchanging Human Monad, actions are still enjoined.* For by *Karma* alone are the vehicles built and organised, whereby the consciousness can function unbroken in all the stages pervading all the phases of life and consciousness. So the *Upanishad* says:—

“Crossing death (loss of this One consciousness with all its powers of memory) through Avidya—” (attachment to higher powers and forms).” †

* *Gîtâ*, II. 37-38.

† *Isopanishad*, II.

Thus equipped, the man abstracts from the apparently conflicting phenomena the underlying Unity, the One all-pervading consciousness. The lower consciousness, instead of rushing to identify itself with the passing and imperfect forms which express the life in the lower planes, seeks for the substratum, the common ground of all experiences. It seeks to trace the reflected images in pleasure and pain, in virtue and vice, to their One Source. The purified intellect learns to disregard the forms, and piercing through the veils seeks the source of their being, and thus allows not pleasure and pain to divert its quest.

The previous experiences in the pairs of opposites have built up the causal body and made it as a sort of break-water, whereon the lower forces expend themselves. The causal body growing thus, through right discrimination and practice of virtues which help in the expression of the inner Life and feed the Individual, is made thus a vehicle for maintaining and expressing the continuity of consciousness, until the Centre has developed the power of existing without any circumference. The growing discrimination between the Real and Unreal which is the effect of the harmonising tendency of the Real Man, whereby the *many* is reduced to the *One*, between the persistent I-notion manifested in every fact of consciousness and the phenomenal forms, in which the I-notion is clothed, helps the building of the causal body, and thus makes of it the bridge which connects the different states and thereby helps the manifestation of this all-comprising I. Aided by this vehicle, and with all its powers manifested as the one-pointed intellect, the I slowly shines forth. This one-pointedness of Buddhi is called in the Gîtâ * the Determinative faculty which does not reason—which does not weigh or balance—but simply says “This is This” and commands conviction. This Buddhi is no

* Gîtâ, II. 41.

longer coloured and distorted by the forms, by percepts and concepts, but pierces them through and eliminates the Real therefrom. The glammers of *Kama* have no distorting effect on this Buddhi, have no weight with its pronouncements. It dallies not with forms and passing shows, but is bent upon seeing the I. The training of the scientific mind exemplifies some of the workings of this higher kind of intellect, and though the search after the I is not the object, yet the powers developed are quite marvellous. To the scientific observer bent on finding out a particular thing, forms are nothing—except so far as they help in the search. He is not disturbed by the local value of things, by the personal factors in the equation; he forgets even the personal self in the search. Newton often forgot the existence of his body and its requirements while thus thinking. This dispassionate quest after truth, this control of the personal, this one-pointedness of intellect and incisiveness of insight, give us some idea of the qualifications necessary for treading the Path of the *Yoga of Rightful Discrimination* with success. This power of analysis, which can do away with the help of forms in the physical, astral, and mental planes, this insight which can recognise the one in the midst of the many and abstract the life irrespective of forms, is only possible when the Higher Self in us has developed its powers to an extraordinary extent. Very few indeed can tread this path, for such intellect and discrimination are rarely to be met with, showing forth as they do the age of the Ego.

With most of us, however, this discrimination needs some form to help its manifestation. A high ideal, for example, will help us to abstract ourselves from the lower forms, serving as the vehicle for the intellect to work with, a point for the self-consciousness to base itself upon. Some noble ideal, human or otherwise, serves more to bring us to harmony and true insight than mere vague intellections. It

offers a standing ground for the intellect to function, a dam to guard it from being carried away by the sweeping torrents of desires and lower mental images, an efficient check preventing its identification with the lower forms, and thereby helping it to be more or less *kama*-less.

What then are the characteristics of the *Yoga* and its preliminary requisites? In the very first place an acute, incisive intellect is required. Such an intellect can only arise when the lower *Kama* forms have died or at least have been rendered powerless. Now, in ordinary humanity, the desire-body is wedded to the body of the mind and very necessarily so. To stimulate the intellect into activity, to build the body of *Manas* into a definite organism and thus afford to the centre within a suitable *upadhi* to develop itself as well as to express its life, it is necessary that all thinking be stimulated by desire. People ordinarily are loth to think, to reason, to generalise and abstract, and generally to perform all the functions of a developed mind, unless the object of thought is related to desires, unless the search after knowledge has for its motive the vibrations of the desire nature, unless it has some concrete object in the plane of desires to stimulate it. All thinking is thus sensuous and *kamic* in its nature, and the mind and the intellect, instead of guiding and controlling the lower functions, are entirely dependent upon these lower vibrations for growth. Even in our present day humanity, thinking is closely attached to *Kama*, as evidenced by the contempt of the mass for metaphysics, as well as by the admiration for those "practical men" who utilise their mental powers to produce tangible results on the plane of the physical in the shape of accessories to physical comfort and luxury. The sluggish mind and intellect are thus stimulated at first into activity by the fiery desire nature, and thus man goes on slowly enriching the higher bodies with the materials of

growth. But when the thinking power has sufficiently developed, the attachment to lower forms, to concrete life, begins to act as an impediment hampering the free activity of the intellect, and the Ego is bound by the ropes of desire, which colour even the ordinary perception. This colouring is a great obstacle to correct thinking, and much more so to the manifestation of true intellect—the one-pointed *Buddhi*, which must be, as we have seen, kamaless and indifferent to the accidents of things. Just as through refraction an object is seen differently from what it naturally is, so too by the action of *Kama* the things which come from the plane of the senses as well as those from the higher planes of *Manas* and *Buddhi* and *Atma* are distorted. Their *direction* too gets changed: things which spring from the Self are thus referred to the personality, as also the pleasures and pains which spring from contact. It is because of the same principle of refraction that we seek for our pleasures and pains in external things and ascribe causality to these. The limitation of the senses is rather a qualitative one, defining the range of vibrations capable of being perceived by them; but the colourings of the personality are both qualitative and quantitative in their action. Thus we get enveloped in a *Maya* of our own creation which perverts true vision. The sense of proportion is lost: the intellect plays with only the husks of things, the crusts created by the action of *Kama*, instead of penetrating to the root of things. Hence is it that balance is spoken of in the *Gîtâ* as the first condition of Right Discrimination and hence of the *Sankhya Yoga*, without which the individual Self is always confounded with the actions of the *Prakritic* forms and energies.

CHAPTER VII.

VIRTUE AND SIN.

THE cognition of the true nature of pleasure and pain—the realisation of their being due to the colouring of the desire nature, and as such merely aspects rather than things *per se*—is thus the first condition of the Sankhya Yoga. It leads, however, to another stage of the development of the Ego in which its relation to the so-called moral laws is realised. The freedom of the Ego from the vibrations of the desire body—the pleasures and pains of the personalities—leads to the freedom of the Ego from what are called *virtue* and *sin*.

Virtue is what expresses the inner life of the Ego at a given stage of evolution as opposed to the outer form. It is the result of the impersonal elements of the Higher Ego being worked into the desire nature, and has the effect of a dim sense of separateness as regards the forms of mental activity called “desires.” If we analyse what are called virtues, we shall find in them the presence of this one element—their principal characteristic—that is silently and almost imperceptibly killing out the *Kama* in lower forms by furnishing higher forms of life and being. The identification of the mind with desire forms is gradually neutralised by the help of these virtues. Though different according to the different stages of evolution, though varying according to the caste of the man in question, yet this one characteristic of freedom,

of a sense of separateness runs through them all. The element of obligation which expresses itself as "you ought" and "you ought not" helps in separating the Ego from the lower forms which it has outgrown. The thinking is thus freed from the thralldom of the lower forms by the help of the relatively higher ones. Thus to help the *Sudra* to grow physical restraint is enjoined, inducing in him thereby the germs of the virtue of forbearance. With the *Vaisya*, the attachment to the artificial sense of the physical Ego is neutralised by holding out the pleasures of *Swarga* as ideal, and the lower desires are restrained in order to get mental pleasures hereafter. With the *Kshattriya*, the attachment to mental pleasures is killed out with the help of the ideal of duty, and the astro-mental Ego is thus transmuted into the causal; while to the *Brahmana* is given the ideal of an Universal Life, thereby helping the life to outgrow the limits even of the causal body in man, built as we know by self-abnegation and virtue.

Thus we see pervading all these forms the principal characteristic of virtue, the attachment to a higher form, so as to evolve with its help from the lower stages of life and consciousness. What is virtue at a lower stage becomes the thing to be renounced in the next higher. Thus we see that virtue is the *formal* mental expression of the laws of growth at a particular stage of evolution, and that it is separative in its tendency, helping to accentuate the difference of the relatively evolved "I" from the relative non-Ego. The two principal characteristics of form and separation thus involved in the notion of virtue, makes it an important instrument of growth of the *formal* self in man—the causal "I." Hence is it that it cannot transcend the planes of mental being, nor help the evolution and development of the Ego in a well-equipped causal body.

The tendency of forms to crystallise and to shut out the

inner life, which is observable in every plane of the Universe, has its effects in the forms we call "virtues." Hence is it that we see not unfrequently virtue crystallising into narrowness. A plastic form, which expressed the life within and wooed it out into activity, becomes rigid and hedges in the Ego with a mental barrier which throws off all vibrations discordant to it and thus proves a serious impediment to further expansion.

By "sin," therefore, we are to understand the tendency to shut out the life. Its essence consists in what Manu succinctly describes as the bondage to the non-Ego. It is the attachment to the form which had hitherto helped evolution and which is now recognised as the not-I. The term non-Ego again varies with the stage of evolution: it means and implies the recognition of particular *upadhis* and lines of activities as being relatively phenomenal, as external things. Sin is thus the result of the hardening of the form after it has been utilised by the Life, and the consequent imprisoning of the life. It is thus the outcome of a virtue of a lower plane, the result of attachment to those very forms which helped the Ego to grow out of the lower stages.

The element of form in both virtue and sin and their relation to the desire-nature show their place in the evolutionary scheme. So long as there is the sense of a personal I, the sense of separation in us, so long are virtue and sin facts in nature. But to the Ego which has attained the stage of non-separation, they must necessarily be non-existent. So long as there is concrete thinking, so long as that thinking is governed by the ideas of pleasure and pain, so long must virtue and sin exist. But in abstract reasoning, in the fields of abstract thought, in what Kant called "the transcendental apperception of self," they must appear as illusions. It is significant here to note that these evolutionary forms have got no place in Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*, while they

are considered essential in the *Critique of Practical Reason*—that halting, half-hearted apology of the great philosopher to the thralldom of religion.

It is clear, therefore, considering the personal element in virtue and sin, that the want of attachment to these forms is the best solvent of the limitations imposed on our consciousness. Thus while sin consists in the attachment to an old, effete and outgrown form, the mere functioning in such a form without attachment, without any sense of loss or gain, eliminating the personal factor therefrom, is no sin. Thus *Arjuna* is asked to fight without any sense of attachment—without any sense of loss or gain, victory or defeat.* Thereby the identification of the Ego with its personal reflection does not exist. The personality which works for gain or loss, and which as we have seen lies at the root of the limitations of virtue and sin, is made a mere instrument. A mere instrument cannot be said to cause anything: we do not punish the tool of the murderer. So when a man exercises his faculties, not for the sake of their personal expression, but merely as an instrument in the hands of the Divine, when he has so identified himself in consciousness with the impersonal self which is the real I in man,—he cannot be said to commit any sin. When he has killed out all personal likes and dislikes, when by purification and control he has rendered his vehicles responsive to the Divine Life, when by the expansion of consciousness the limitations of the personality drop off, then a man cannot be said to act himself, and all his actions cannot but conform to the spirit of the Divine Life. The same sun which gives life to all—the source of all energies—is also the cause of deaths by sunstroke, and we neither praise nor blame the abstract energy working through Prakriti.

As the Gîtâ says—"He who knows thus the relation

* Gîtâ, II. 33.

between *Purusha* and *Prakriti* with its *gunas* is never subjected (to the workings of *Prakriti*) even when transcending its laws." * So the man who knows the utility of these forms can wield them for the purposes of helping the world in its evolutionary path, and is not bound by the results of his actions.

One of the greatest impediments to the realisation of the One Self in man—the attainment of *Sankhya Yoga*—is the attachment to the conflicting forms of Virtue and Sin. It is only when the Ego knows itself as a mighty immeasurable Existence and Consciousness, which like the ocean remains one and the same, unaffected by ripples in it of Time and Space, Virtue and Vice, Pleasure and Pain, Joy and Sorrow, that it is said to know itself. It is only when the Ego can see unperturbed its own images in the various *upadhis* and the thousands of forms appertaining thereto, when it knows itself to be the source of all these *and yet none of these*, then only is the goal of the *Sankhya Yoga* reached, and the Human Monad knows itself then as the Logos of its own Universe.

Such a man knowing the Self is not afraid. As the Upanishad says :—

“He is not disturbed by the thoughts ‘I have not done good acts. Why have I done evil acts?’ † He sees these—Virtue and Sin—as phases of the one Self”—and is content.

* Gītā, XIII. 23.

† Taittiriya Upanishad, II. 9.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE ONE LIFE.

THE cognition of the One Life in man, the Human Monad, through the play of this one-pointed intellect, is thus possible only when the intellect ceases to identify itself with the "pairs of opposites"; when piercing through the veil of forms it can see the one informing Life pervading all the bodies, creating artificial centres in them and yet not one with them—the source of all cognitions, yet separate from the objects cognised. Like the one white light manifesting as different colours in various forms, the One Human Monad, the "I," the Human Self, is then felt as interpenetrating all the modes of consciousness with all their categories and forms. The sense of identification of this I with the artificial semi-automatic centres, the physical Ego, the astral Ego, and so forth, is destroyed; and like a string connecting the beads, the one Ego, the *Sutratma*, is sensed as pervading these apparent centres of consciousness and running through the forms of thoughts and desires, sensations and perceptions—their one uniform substratum. Pleasures and pains, likes and dislikes, the conditions of thinking, the so-called laws of thought, the categories of thought, of modality, causality, and so forth, appear as time-ripples in the mighty ocean of Self. Unaffected by the changes in the bodies, the I is like the *Akasha*, which interpenetrates every thing and is yet

constant. United to Buddhi the bonds of individual Karma fall off, for Karma is the projection of this I and its identification with its images. Self-centred, there is henceforth no desire in the Monad to externalise itself, for it has known the images to be itself. From within the womb of the well-developed causal body, the Individual views the lower bodies as its instruments, and unaffected by changes it abstracts the ingredients of growth involved in the *upadhis* without identifying itself with them. Instead of the various conflicting 'I's' and the ever limiting non-Ego, the one I is seen, and hence the rapid growth. In all actions the One Life, the I, is cognised, and hence there is nothing to bind, and the fetters of Karma drop off.

As regards the effects of these actions on others, there is also a decided gain—*there is no loss of effort*.* The Ego views the actions as being due to energies of Nature: he is not attached to their fruits; for he knows these to be mere forms—externalisations of the One Life. If the actions succeed, it is well. The Ego is not dependent on these images for sustenance, for the development of its I-notion, for Existence, Bliss and Consciousness. It no longer seeks to externalise itself, to reflect itself in these; it needs no longer any vehicle to know itself as it is—the Human Self. This non-attachment to the activities of the bodies—which during the previous stages of growth he had controlled and purified by the long lines of past evolution in action, and which are become now perfect *upadhis*, perfect instruments in his hands,—has the effect of producing the greatest possible results. The personality with its desire for fruit does not dictate the direction in which the action is to, expend itself; the mind is not attached to the way in which effects should arise, and hence without let or hindrance the proper effects are produced. Desireless action is like *motion in vacuo* and

* Gîtâ, II. 40.

is eternal. The initial energy does not lose itself in overcoming the friction which the tendency of grasping (not to speak of the resistance thus generated in the untransmuted desire-nature) would generate in the minds of others: it is not deviated from its proper channel by the working of the desire-nature. All desires, being personal, have for their object the seeking for their own satisfaction, and thus arouse hostile feelings in those agents, within or outside ourselves, which have similar grasping tendencies. That is why the satisfaction of one part of our nature rouses the opposite parts into hostility. For the self-same reason, the enjoyment of one sense is incomplete, unless the others co-operate. Thus eating in the dark does not produce so much pleasure as when the eyes co-operate. So, too, personal ways of doing even the best thing rouse hostility in others, and thus create opposing forces. In desireless actions, there being no opposition to combat, no *kama* to retard, and no motion to divert, the force generated is not spent in meeting opposition and in producing the lower fruits in the shape of personal pleasures, mental and even lower. The vibrations pass on unretarded till they affect the macrocosm with uniform acceleration and the great macrocosmic Centres—the Powers called Devas Who preside over the workings of the universe—can avail Themselves of the energy thus set free and produce results which, in Their wisdom, They know as truly beneficial to the whole creation.

Like forces imparted to a dense, rigid medium, actions with desire are soon expended by the constant friction generated. They are further *refracted* again and again, bringing back to the sender the proper fruits, while actions without desire being so to say directionless, are not so refracted, and can easily be utilised by the Cosmic Powers to produce the greatest possible results. Taking a concrete example—we see thus a man who is actuated by personal *kama* soon

wears out the physical vehicle, while another with a higher motive would still work on. Thus in everyday life we see that the more impersonal the motive—the higher it is—the greater is the effect produced. So a man who seeks wealth for physical comfort soon breaks down, and the results produced are circumscribed within narrower limits than when the motive power is the amelioration of the condition of the race. The self-seeking man exhausts himself sooner than his philanthropic brother. Even on the gross body the effects are markedly different. The body wears out sooner if it is made to work with lower motives of self-gratification, than when the motive is altruistic. The more the volume and the greater the density of matter, the greater the drain of the energies; the rarer the medium the greater the effect. Thus we can conceive what takes place when the personal factor is eliminated. Such a man, devoid of *kama*, is well said to feed the Gods and the Gods feed him in return, and thus helped he effects more by his impersonal thinking than even what is dreamt of by a man with *kama* for self. Verily *yoga* is skill in action.*

Further, such impersonal actions by purifying *kama* go to build the body of the impersonal Higher Self, creating the links whereby the Higher can manifest itself in the lower consciousness of the mental, the astral, and the physical planes. A man thus striving is attracting the higher life, where the pleasures and pains of the Earth-life appear as nothing and dwindle into insignificance in the larger existence. It is like gaining a wider survey of life, where these petty things of the personal man appear infinitesimally small, nay, where they resolve into the nature of a foolish dream at best. Gaining this sense of proportion—this enlargement of vision—the adult views the sorrows of a child as nothing but pure fancy. Consequent on this enlargement

* Gītā, 50.

of consciousness, this expansion of view-point, the Ego becomes more and more unaffected by the minor things in life. The conception of the "I" as pervading all the lower planes being gained, the little joys and sorrows of a life are fitted into their proper place in the whole scheme and affect us not. Fear, which is due to the attachment of the inner Life to a temporary form, goes, for the man now sees a larger life which is unaffected by it. Death, with its fears due to the identification of the consciousness with the body, to the imprisoning of the Life by attachment to the form, loses its terrors, and is viewed merely as a change of state, as natural and as easy as sleep. The consciousness, now untrammelled by the form, feels not the pangs of separation. Nothing is taken from it. In the form lies death, and in the formless, immortality. So when this all-comprehending unity in consciousness is gained, when the real Man is seen, where is sorrow? where is illusion? The one embracing consciousness is unaffected by the illusions of form, and for it fear and death are mere airy nothings. Hence is it that the Gîtâ says: "In this *yoga* there is no loss of effort, no disappointment; and even a little of this Dharma saves (us) from great fear."*

The realisation of this One Self, the One Human Monad, solves another and a metaphysical difficulty. In all concepts, pleasurable and painful, there is an out-putting of the powers of the Ego. In those which are pleasurable the Ego finds an expression, however faint and transitory, of its own nature of *ananda*. It reflects itself in these, regarding them as parts of its own being, and thereby builds the lines of communication with the bodies. With the painful ones, there is also an outputting; the Ego in its search after harmony and bliss, and mistaking the pleasurable concepts as expressions of its own being, naturally tries to fight

* Gîtâ, II. 40.

against those concepts and sensations which threaten to break off this continuity of consciousness, which jeopardize the manifestation of its being; and, as already observed, it tries to preserve the artificial harmony created by pleasures. With the one, the Ego manifests the desire to get and to enhance the pleasurable percepts and concepts, and this desire is called "*yoga*." With the other, however, the Ego tries to preserve what it has got, to retain the pleasurable vibrations and prevent them from being submerged by the hostile vibrations of pain. This tendency is called "*kshema*." Between the play of these two, and the outputtings of the powers of the Ego, the bodies are built into vehicles, into organisms with definite lines of adaptation. The pleasurable evokes into being the powers of the Ego; while the painful helps the assimilation of its food. With one, the materials of growth are garnered, while the other helps in the development of the powers of balance, of proper assimilation and of real strength. Thus grows the Ego in the development of its powers.

But here one difficulty presents itself. The I-notion of the Ego is cast into these various forms producing various conflicting images. The very outputting of the powers in the Ego energises these forms of pleasure and pain, manifold in their nature, with something of the powers of the Ego put out at the time of their creation. An artificial vitality is induced in them by the energies of the Ego, and they react in time upon it. While the forms are plastic and express the life of the Ego, the inner consciousness can string them together and the harmony with the Ego would not be disturbed. But crystallising as they do, they create, or rather induce in the Ego, unyielding divisions—confining the life of the Ego in these rigid conflicting forms. The one-pointed Buddhi, instead of embracing all these and drawing proper sustenance from each, now loses itself in

these artificial forms of life. The one unifying consciousness becomes sub-divided within itself. Instead of the one all-pervading I-notion permeating these forms, there now appear in the Ego hostile and conflicting centres,—each submerging the one consciousness and thus disturbing the harmony of the Life. Each of these semi-independent centres of activity and consciousness in the Ego imprisons the Life and shuts out the light within. If we analyse ourselves and probe into the mysterious depths of our being, we shall find that though there is a general I-notion pervading all our acts and thoughts, yet how heterogeneous and conflicting the contents thereof are—conflicting with each other and standing in the way of the realisation of the homogeneous Ego in us. The existence of these semi-independent and self-conflicting centres in our being is the cause of the apparently sudden transformations of men. The phenomena of a religious man turning into a criminal,—of the saint and philosopher of to-day transforming into the libertine of to-morrow—of the patriotic, philanthropic man in the outer world changing into a brutal tyrant at home—have all their source in these conflicting, semi-automatic centres in the life and consciousness of the Ego, unreduced to homogeneity and harmony. Even our daily consciousness, if subjected to a close scrutiny, would unfold a dismal picture of this heterogeneity and conflict in the manifestation of the I-notion. The religious enthusiasm of to-day appears as dull, stale and unprofitable to-morrow. The higher life of the present appears flat the very next moment, and so forth. It is a very common experience with those desiring to lead the higher life of the Heart, to find how the ideal which to-day evoked all the spiritual forces within and made life a thing of bliss and therefore worth living, will fail even to attract us to-morrow,—how the lower outlets of the senses, which had hitherto lain dormant and apparently dead, will

rouse and drag us down, throwing into chaos the artificial sense of bliss, of security, with which we had lulled ourselves. The deeper we dive into the depths of our being, the greater the heterogeneity and conflict we see. The foolish man remains content with the sense of security, the outward harmony and the artificial life. But the man who wants to know and realise himself, who longs to live the life of Divine Harmony and Bliss, has a difficult task before him. He must not lull himself into a sense of false security ; for that is impossible so long as there is conflict within himself, within his own nature ; he must not allow himself to be beguiled by this temporary harmony ; he should not be contented with a mere vague I-notion. But, on the other hand, he is to harmonise his nature even in its minutest parts ; he must synchronise these jarring centres in his being ; he must reduce all these conflicting elements to the One Consciousness from which they spring into existence. He must realise a larger harmony in the One Life, by seeing through these hostile forms and by realising the Life as reflected in them, through the one-pointed Buddhi. With this spiritual insight, which comes through the dim realisation of the true nature of the self in him—with this his penetrating vision—he sees the one Life manifested in these various forms. He is not diverted in his all-piercing insight by the accidents of forms : his Buddhi transcends the jarring illusions created by the many. He is not disturbed by the various forms of intellect, of mind, and the senses ; and seeing the One Life manifested in all, he attains to the Yoga of the Self.

CHAPTER IX.

THE LAWS OF MIND.

THE self-centring of the Human Monad in itself, the development of a self-conscious centre, through right discrimination of the Real and the Unreal, between the permanent, indestructible, and all-pervading noumenon, the I, and the phenomenal transitory expressions in general, is the theme of the second Chapter of the Gîtâ. As can be imagined, this implies the recognition in consciousness of what is known in Theosophical literature as the Higher Self, the Triad, through the one-pointedness of Buddhi. That is what Kant has dimly felt as the "transcendental apperception of the self"—that is to say, the Human Self, through the functioning of an abstract intellect. By this recognition, the qualities of the lower nature fall off, and even the mental forms are viewed as being of the non-Ego. The I in the highest of us is but the modification of the true I, the Highest Self—due to the ascriptions of the flaws of the mind. It is the Human Monad appearing through the forms of the mind-body, called by Kant "Categories of Thought," and modified by the Laws of the Mind. Thus the I which is impersonal appears to be projected in Time and Space, through Causality and Modality. It is thus felt as if coming into existence at a particular point of time. Thus its own nature as the eter-

nal and uncaused, without any limit and pervading ever the lower forms of consciousness, is seen as modified by the notions of Time and Space. We see it undergoing apparent changes and modifications caused by the mind and desires. Nay, we ascribe to it even the momentary and transient phases which properly belong to the form-side of its being, just as we ascribe the motion of the running stream to the sun as mirrored therein. Thus even a dim hazy intellectual conception of the laws of its being is a great help on the Path, for it is the first perception of the One which pervades the many. As already said, there is no sorrow, no delusion for the man who can dimly sense this One Consciousness stringing together the lower forms of being and yet above them all. All the teachings of the Shastras are meant for this; they all go to evoke this consciousness, and the discrimination between virtue and sin, between the real and the unreal, the I and the non-I, which constitute true *viveka*, have all this bearing. As already seen, to help in this attainment, the wisdom of the Great Rishis has provided higher and higher ideals, by and through which the soul is gradually, through many lives, raised to this exalted state of consciousness.

The evolution of a stable intellect, incisive in its nature, which can pierce through the veils of the lower bodies, is the first requisite; and it requires for its manifestation a long training in discrimination and non-attachment, and the cultivation of virtues. Hence is it that the Gītā* insists that the false knowledge of the I, as being affected by the vehicles and being identical with them, should be conquered, for though the characteristic of the intellect is isolation and separation, yet through it the non-I is separated from the I, and the attachment to the lower bodies is conquered. This is why the virtue of forbearance, implying

* Gītā, II. 22-23.

as it does the separation of the real from the unreal, the permanent from the evanescent—in fact, the first manifestation in the lower planes of this intellect—is demanded at the very outset. Thus we see that, even in the life of the every-day world, in the understanding of even the simplest thing, in the first stages of the development of knowledge, we require this virtue of forbearance and patience. The child carried away by the sensation, say, of a pain, cannot localise it, much less describe it: we must needs separate ourselves from the pain in order to know its true character, and that separation is impossible so long as we are suffering under it. So we, adult children, are unable to grasp the significance, the true import of every pleasure and pain which affects us. This is why Spinoza spoke of feelings, meaning not perceptions but emotions, as being hostile to true knowledge. Hence also, H. P. B. speaks of the mind, the Lower Manas, as the Rajah of the senses, “the thought producer, he who awakes illusion,” and “as the great slayer of the real,” which ought to be killed out, in order that right perception may be possible.*

The characteristic mark of the *Muni* of stable mind is that he has no anxiety about untoward things, nor any attachment to those which conduce to pleasure. He is free from attachment and identification—fear and anger.† If we analyse ourselves we shall find that the zest of our pleasures lies in the expectation, and that the poignancy of our pains is due to our anxiety at the idea of the breaking of our idols. The infinite difference which exists between man and man, the barrier which separates us from our fellows, is due to the colouring imparted to our perceptions and conceptions by the grasping desire-nature. The friend, or the enemy, is merely the ascription of the desire-nature to certain patent facts, and varies with the attitude of the mind. Everything

* *Voice of the Silence.*

† *Gîtâ*, II. 56.

in nature is sevenfold ; even the physical atom has got seven phases of life and energy enfolded within it, and our desires being the acceptance of the *Kamic* nature in things bind us only to that side—that phase—of a thing which can subserve our *Kamic* nature, and which goes to feed and develop the grasping tendency in us. The growing I-consciousness thus gets involved in these passing phases of life, and becomes imprisoned in each form of *Kama*—which being grasping must necessarily shut out the life. This *Kamic* tinge—manifesting as likes and dislikes—as fear and anger—pleasure and pain—colours even the ordinary external perception, and our desires body forth the form of things unknown, and non-existent too. Sense-limitations have only a quantitative effect: the imperfections of the senses can only delude us as to the extent of precision in our vision. But the presence of the colouring matter of *Kama*, the desire to grasp things and the desire to possess, distort things qualitatively and change their very character. We care only for things as they affect us for good or for evil: we disregard their real value and confine ourselves to the *local* one. Hence it is that our desires make us see Helen's beauty on the brow of Egypt. That is why the Gītā says that “he who is without attachment even when getting favourable or unfavourable things, who doth neither rejoice nor hate, he is the man whose wisdom is stable.”*

The control and purification of the body of desires, however, is not enough—it does not satisfy all the conditions of true knowledge. We have as the second requisite the killing out of the attachment of the Ego to the forms of the mental planes. The attachment to the desire forms can be restrained by a life of rigid asceticism. The recognition that there is a loss of self-consciousness due to the identification with the astro-mental forms of the astral plane, which lies

* Gītā, III. 37.

at the root of and stimulates all asceticism, is not enough. The recognition of a harmony in the midst of desires—the higher-harmony which lulls the violent and conflicting actions of these desire images—is not sufficient to satisfy this second condition. Hence it is that we have further to kill out the attachment to the mental forms—to harmonise the jarring factors in our mental being. The memory of pleasures and pains is to be controlled, and we have still further the duty of killing out the dependence of consciousness on the very laws of the mind-body, the laws of thinking and the forms of thinking, as they are called.

Let us examine in detail the nature and workings of these mental laws and forms. Let us examine in the very first place the Laws of Thought. These are the specific forms of activity of the mind-body—the mental sheath in man—the functions of the *Upadhi* which go to help mental assimilation. Just as the physical laws of assimilation transform the heterogeneous food into the substances of the body, so too these functions of the mind-sheath help in the transforming and synthesising of experience. Without these laws mental concepts cannot be brought together and compared, or contrasted as the case may be. Reason and discrimination cannot manifest. These Laws of Association, of Contiguity and so forth, go to bring together mental concepts and to arrange, classify and harmonise them. Experience—which means the proper assimilation of the mental food—is impossible without these laws, which compare, analyse, and contrast the concepts and deduce their nature and place in the body. Memory, which in the mental planes is the form-side of consciousness, cannot arise, nor can the development and evolution of the I-notion. Such are the functions of the laws and their utility in the earlier stages of evolution.

But later on, these very laws go to hamper the further progress of the man by identifying the Human Monad with

the concepts and the laws themselves. These very laws, in the first place, associate and correlate the I-notion with the concepts, and thus pin it to definite and particular forms. A great part of what is known as the *unexhausted Karma* is due to the association of the Monad with the finer forms of the mental plane. Those who are trying to know themselves, through introspection and meditation, may realise in some measure the crushing and paralysing effects of the memory of these concepts of the past: they can conceive something of the nature of these mental forms and laws and their power of imprisoning the consciousness. Every new concept brings in its train, by the action of these laws, past associations, and these colour and distort the thinking and bind the Ego within their rigid bounds. The isolated mental images of acts, desires and thinkings—much as they influence the thinking—are nothing in their effect when compared to the whole train of ideas evoked under the working of these mental laws. Thus, for example, the past life of the man, now transformed into what is called habit and lines of thinking, will not allow the Ego to think otherwise than along these rigid lines. Thus if he had in his earlier days regarded religious symbols with scepticism and scorn born of his ignorance, now when he finds out the utility of the symbols, his past habit of scoffing will stand in his way and prevent the full acceptance, the complete assimilation, of the new experience. Reason habituated to one way of viewing things will strongly refuse to accept the new life. Doubts will arise, and divide the consciousness against itself; and disunion and disharmony will be the result. The very laws which ensure regularity, precision, and ease to thinking, the very laws which conduce best to conservation of energy, now hamper the activities of the Ego. Thus in this case his past will rise up against him and make progress difficult. This is an example of the paralysing effects of the *unexhausted*

Karma—which expresses itself as mental capacities, and so forth.

So act these mental Laws as regards their expression ; their contents colouring true insight and disturbing the sense of proportion of things. This is why in the earlier stages of discipleship all efforts are directed towards purifying the contents of the lower mind by the company of those who are more advanced and who show forth in their thinking more of the higher life. So also simple and passive receiving—either through hearing or by the study of books which have a loftier tone—is made the gateway to spiritual life. These slowly modify the contents of the mind, by gradually eliminating all that is low and impure, and elevating the general tone with other and helpful associations, and thus furnish the Ego with weapons wherewith to fight and control the lower tendencies.

Apart from this process of elimination of the contents of the mind, apart from purifying these mental residues of actions, and these capacities and habits of the mind, the Ego has to conquer the very laws of the mind-body. It has the still higher task of rising superior to these laws and knowing them as mere functions of the mind. Just as, in the physical plane, the very law of gravitation helps all our movements and is turned into a source of power by one who knows its real nature and workings and who can use it with freedom to regulate all his actions—so also these mental Laws are to be known and reduced to the service of the inner man, furnishing him with new instruments wherewith to help evolution and to bring about the results desired. He has got thus to know all these laws and modes of activity as the non-I, no longer as fetters which limit his freedom, but as instruments and vehicles which express his life in the mental planes. Knowing these laws, he can balance and neutralise them and use them if need be for the helping of

the world. The thinking principle, freed from the thralldom of these laws and mental forms, is not distracted by their workings, and the man attains to peace. This is why the *Gîtâ* says—"Where thy *Buddhi* transcends the illusion, then thou attainest dispassion as regards the things which ought to be heard, as well as those which have been heard. When thy *Buddhi*—distracted by the influences of all that is heard—becomes calm and balanced in *Samadhi*, then thou attainest to *Yoga*." * The dependence of the I-notion on these laws and forms of concepts ought to be controlled ere the mind *Buddhi* can arise.

* *Gîtâ*, II. 52-53.

CHAPTER X.

MENTAL CATEGORIES.

WE have now to consider another difficulty, which prevents the development of true knowledge and wisdom. The *muni* of stable mind has to remove another obstacle, which arises out of the form-side of the mental *upadhi*. Not only are the Laws of Association and the like to be conquered and the freedom of the Ego secured—not only are the mental residues of concepts and percepts, and habits of thinking to be mastered, but the modes of working of the mind-body are to be recognised as being of the non-Ego, and hence impermanent. Just as the physical body has got its own forms of vibrations, just as the senses have their normal ranges of vibration, so also the mind-body has got its distinct forms of activity peculiar to it. Just as a light vibration which does not fall within the capacity of the eye and its range appears as darkness, so also all mental vibrations, which do not harmonise with those modes of mental activity, make no impression on consciousness. These modes or forms are what Kant calls the categories of thought, such as Time and Space, Causality and Modality. Let us understand their functions, and how they act as helps to thinking. Let us take *Space* for example. The metaphysical form of Space is that mode of the mind whereby the I is cognised as being separate from the not-I. In the lower phases of

ordinary physical, astral and mental consciousness, this form gives the idea of objective space. Due to the colouring of this mode of mental activity, the sense of our having distinct and separate bodies—as opposed to the so-called external objects—comes into existence. Thus the I in the physical is identified with its vehicle and sharply sundered from the external objects. So also arises the limiting sense of the I in the higher bodies. Yet without this Space-notion intellect cannot arise; nay, even sensations are impossible. There can be no comparison nor classification without the substratum of this mode of consciousness, and instead of order and harmony in the percepts, there will be, at the most, a series of blurred and indistinct perceptions and conceptions, unrelated and un-co-ordinated in a veritable mental chaos. For the processes of comparison and classification mean and imply the presence of a common ground of these percepts in spite of their formal difference. To see even a tree we must see it as distinct and separate from the surroundings, as a point in objective space which limits and defines it, and also as separate and distinct from the I. This sense of limitation is characteristic of the idea of Space in every plane of consciousness.

Now this Space—the abstract expression of the relation of the Ego to the non-Ego—manifests differently in different planes. The lower the plane, the greater the limitations expressed by what are known as the dimensions of Space. Thus our ordinary consciousness of all external perceptions is governed by the three dimensions—length, breadth and thickness. We see objects as being in these three dimensions, separated from the thinking Centre in these three ways, so to say, expressing the inner consciousness in these three ways and limiting it within them. Thus a being which has got only the idea of one dimensional Space is unable to move in any direction, for that would imply the

knowledge of Space in two dimensions. So too a being of two dimensional Space cannot cross a line in the plane of its activity, for the idea of height being unknown, the line would appear as a wall enclosing it. So is it with us if we are enclosed in a room (which means Space in three dimensions); we cannot get out of it, and even the idea of a way out, apart from these three dimensions, is an impossibility. But the fact that it is possible for a man so to step out is seen in the phenomena connected with the astral body, such as clairvoyance for example.

Thus do the dimensions of Space limit the activity of the Ego: they become chains which limit the manifestation of consciousness, which hamper the free activity of the Ego by confining it within definite limits and making it impossible for the consciousness to function in a different and higher plane. Necessary in the earlier stages to prevent the dissipation of self-consciousness and to generate the stable notion of I, these dimensions of Space shut out later on the light from above, and what is more, prevent true vision. Thus though living and moving in the midst of the astral and the higher planes, we are unconscious of these. Further, all higher vibrations from these planes, all impressions from above, get transformed in the transmission, a fact which the study of dreams goes very far to establish. The sense of attachment to the body is one of the restrictions imposed on the Ego by three dimensional Space and makes even the conception of the real nature of the Ego an impossibility. Thus Space, which is commensurate with, and is the formal expression of, the life and consciousness of the Self, is limited by the projections of mental ideas of resistance, manifesting as dimensions. These mental ideas, if they can be so termed, are the relics—the memories of the *Mahat*—The Cosmic I—Brahma, the limitations and modifications in His consciousness, and act on man as

barriers to consciousness when crystallised. Just as the memories of an abstract nature, of laws and capacities non-existent in the condition of dreamless sleep, gradually manifest as restraining bounds to the awakened consciousness on the physical plane—just as the freedom of activity of the Ego even in dreams is thrown into the background by the influence of the physical ideas of time and place, so too these modifications in the consciousness of Brahma are the cause of the externalisation and limitation in the consciousness of man. The Muni has to conquer the difficulty and to know these relics of cosmic memory as being of the not-I.

These mental forms gather matter around them as they come down to the physical, losing plasticity and dimension. We thus come to regard things as external instead of regarding them as the projections of the mental modifications. We are bound to the shells of things, instead of knowing the essence. We can contact things only in their external crusts, and ascribe to these the inner reality. We long always to realise the Self, but the form (the result of the projection of the mental idea of Space) meets only the form, and the life cannot commingle with Life. We are hedged in with rigid notions of the dimensions, and hence cannot go beyond these. In meditation too this spatial notion acts as bar to the play and expansion of the consciousness. The I, limited by the physical body, cannot sense and contact the higher planes of life and being. We seek to carry on into those regions the notion of the I enclosed in three dimensions, and in consequence the higher regions remain ever as sealed books to us. Hence even an intellectual grasp of higher forms of Space is a great help in freeing the consciousness from the shackles of the physical body. This is why the Ego should be always conceived as being above the forms of the Mind, in order to ensure success in meditation.

Let us take another category and consider its effects on the consciousness. Let us analyse the form of Causality. It expresses itself in the mental notion of everything having a cause and thus having been produced. Without this form intellect cannot grow; the powers of analysis and discrimination would remain undeveloped. It is this form of the thinking principle which spurs us on to probe deeper into the nature of things. It rouses all the powers of intellect and helps it in its function of discriminating between the Real—the Cause, and the Unreal—the Caused. The tendency to seek for causes coupled with the action of the category of Space makes us localise causes in the plane where the consciousness functions. Thus a child tripping would ascribe it to impediments outside rather than to its own haste and indiscretion. Thus do we attribute effects to people, instead of finding the higher cause within our desire and mental natures. We are led thus to pin our happiness on external things, to seek for help without, and to attribute knowledge and wisdom to the instrumentality of things.

Thus does the notion of Causality distort the insight into the true nature of things. But its effect on the I-notion is greater still. As, through the influence of the form of Space with its dimensions, the *mayavic* appearance of the I identified with the vehicles is generated, so too, instead of ascribing notions of causality and change to the workings of *Prakriti*, the notion of the I, as the actor, comes into being. Instead of regarding the "I" as the eternal and unchangeable Spectator of the panorama of the form-side, it is regarded as the actor, and further as being affected by all external things. This ascription of causality to the Ego leads to Black Magic and other delusions, in the spiritual planes of being. The anthropomorphic ideas of Godhead, of creation, are all due to the colouring of the category of Causality.

Such are these mental modes—mental resistance to

consciousness, manifesting as Time, Space, Causality and Modality. They have the effect of confining the consciousness within certain limits, and colouring all things transmitted through them, either from the physical inwards, or from within outwards, and thereby transforming all knowledge. When the forms lose their plasticity, the I-notion is imprisoned within them and thus gets subdivided into conflicting images, and as a consequence, instead of the one I, we are limited to its multifarious phases and momentary expressions. Such a state of things cannot but produce chaos instead of helping the realisation of the oneness of Life.

CHAPTER XI.

GROWTH BY THE SANKHYA.

WE are now in a position to understand something of the nature of the *Sankhya Yoga* as taught in the Gîtâ. It is the process of union, of recognition and realisation of the One Life pervading the forms—the one Human Monad as the basis and substratum of all forms, physical, astral, mental and intellectual. It is the process of realising the one I as pervading all forms, by the action of a well-trained and discriminative intellect which can penetrate through these heterogeneous forms and cognise the One Life permeating them all and finding its expression therein.

When all effects of actions, all desire-forms and all forms of the Mind, and the attachment thereto, are destroyed, the Ego—firmly fixed on the knowledge of its own nature and being—is called the “*Sthita Pragna*” or the stable consciousness. When it is able not only to conquer the disturbing influences of the astral forms, when after the mental residues of sensations and perceptions are harmonised and the one Life seen acting through them all,—when the Ego, unaffected by the mental laws and forms, can see itself as the one unchanging spectator of all these forces and forms—then alone is this *Yoga* possible of attainment.

We may here note, in passing, the method of treatment which obtains in the first six chapters of the Gîtâ. The

then existing schools of thought are taken up and explained, and then they are given the characteristic master-touch, which harmonises all of these with the whole. Thus, in the Second Chapter, the views of the real *Saṅkhya* are taken up and explained. It is shown how, by discrimination and dispassion, a knowledge of the I—the Human Self—as distinct from the various sheaths is possible of attainment. The process is by positing the Ego as against the non-Ego, and as such it implies some knowledge—it may be unconscious knowledge—of the nature of the Ego, the knowledge which is used as the criterion, the basis for differentiation, in this process of discrimination. This process of discrimination is taken up by the Lord, and its effects in the various planes are explained. It is shown how, with the help of this discrimination, bodies are known as of the non-Ego, and how the Ego thereby gradually indraws itself and attains to the *Sthita Pragna* stage, where it gives up attachment to all mental forms and is content with itself,—no longer trying to reflect itself for the sake of existence and self-consciousness in the lower forms,—when devoid of all anxiety about things disharmonious and painful, and of all thirst after pleasure, the Ego becomes free from the desire-forms of attachment with the opposites, fear and anger,—when the presence of pleasurable things does not excite, nor the painful ones depress, and when, like the tortoise, the Ego indraws within itself the outgoing tendency manifesting as the senses, and is firm in self-knowledge.* The Ego, now of stable mind and intellect, can view these with perfect dispassion and its self-consciousness is not submerged by the play of forces. It sees the one I pervading all these bodies, the substratum of all activities, and knowing its true nature is content.

Let us now understand a little the actual process of

* Gîtâ, II. 55-58.

growth in this form of *Yoga*. The Ego, coming under the influence of the various and conflicting forms and forces, puts forth a part of its energy. The food contained in the various sheaths—the various reflected I notions—is thus assimilated and built into its being. This out-putting is called *Viveka* or Discrimination, and is what in the mental world takes the place of the out-putting of bile and gastric juice in the stomach. Just as the secretions from the stomach help in the first place to separate the necessary ingredients from the non-essential elements of the food, and then transform the food into chyle and so forth—just as the coarse matter is transmuted into nerve and brain stuff and serves as a basis for the manifestation of higher energy, so also the out-putting of intellect called *Viveka* analyses and discriminates between the various ingredients in our mental food, and transforms them into experience and wisdom, whereby the Chit aspect of the Immortal Self in man can manifest and make itself known in the lower planes of the personality—making the personality more and more receptive to its master-touch. By *Viveka*, the Ego thus picks out and assimilates the various and even conflicting I-notions involved in the astro-mental images. It sees how the I gets imprisoned in these forms ; how the only reality in all percepts and concepts and even thoughts, is this reflected I confined and dominated by these ephemeral forms. Hence the principle of this *Yoga* is analysis and separation. The keener the power of analysis and the more unclouded by the passing forms, and the stabler the I-notion whereby it can separate itself from these forms, and view their workings as a disinterested spectator,—the more rapid the growth and development of its inner powers, and the quicker the realisation of its own true nature. This is why this power of indrawing the I-notion from the outside planes, this power of separation, is essential to this *Yoga*—and so the

Gītā says—"Just as the tortoise draws its limbs within itself, so also, when the *Yogi* indraws himself and his senses from the sense-objects, then his wisdom becomes stable."* This indrawing means the recognition by the man of something which is eternal and unaffected by the forms, and the control and mastery of the out-going tendencies, called the *Indryas*, "Senses," which bring out the Ego to seek expression for itself in the lower planes. Thus steady practice of meditation—which develops this power of indrawing—coupled with steady work in controlling and purifying the senses and the mind of *kama*, is the first stage of this *Yoga* of the conscious realisation of the Human Self. Hence, too, the practice of daily reviewing one's thoughts, words and actions from the stand-point of the eternal and unchangeable Ego, the One substratum of all activities, the Centre of all manifestations in the physical, astral, and mental planes, is so very helpful. Thereby the forms and the energies vitalising these planes are known as the not-I and traced to their source, and the Ego is helped in its expression even in the lower planes by purifying these, thereby stringing together the conflicting centres of being and activity in these planes into one harmonious whole. Thus form after form comes to be known as the not-I, and yields its inner secrets, their why and wherefore, to the disinterested spectator. So, armed with the wisdom resulting, he can use and manipulate them—utilise them in the uplifting of himself and subsequently of humanity. Life and Death become to him mere forms which can not submerge his all-pervading consciousness. Content in self, he seeks not the ephemeral expressions thereof in the various vehicles which lead to *Kama*—and thus free at the centre, firm in self-knowledge and knowing his true nature, he attains to the supreme state.† Knowing the transitory

* *Gītā*, II. 58.

† *Gītā*, II. 51.

nature of the forms, seeing the broken images of the self as reflected therein in their proper worth, he rushes not after these but becomes a "*Samyami*," one who is content with himself and who does not give way to the influences of the forms. He abstains, not because of any external compulsion in the shape of Scriptural injunctions or even notions of duty, but because he can see through the veils and realise the fleeting nature of things, because his eyes have been opened to the One which reflects itself in the many in order to evoke its inner forms and powers. Through analysis and knowledge he can see the eternal element in things and hence longs not for the external crusts. Thus the consciousness, untrammelled by the forms and free from the colouring influence of the broken reflections therein, sees the one Life and Consciousness in every state of being, in pleasure and pain, in life and death.

The gaps in consciousness between different states, between waking and sleep, between sleep and *Shushupti*, which we observe in every-day life, the fatal gaps in passing through which the I-notion is lost, these neutral barriers of consciousness are to him non-existent. These gaps in the consciousness of the Ego are mainly due to the identification of the Life with forms—with the various *upadhis*, in which it functions. The Life identifying itself with the form thinks itself lost, and indeed loses hold upon itself as soon as the forms drop. We are normally under the dominance of these forms, and the one I-notion is lost in the myriads of broken images. Just as the myriad divergent rays of the Sun cannot but burn when converged through the medium of a lens and display the burning power of their source, so too these conflicting I-notions, due to the attachment to the various forms, do not help in freeing the consciousness from the thralldom of the forms, and the one consciousness, the Divine Man, gets absorbed in things and is lost in them.

It is only when the one consciousness is dimly perceived as pervading the forms and yet unaffected by these—when the Ego knows itself in the midst of the infinite variety of forms—when its eyes, not blinded by the mere externals of things, can see itself reflected in all and yet not limited by any of these—when it does not allow itself to be lost in the myriads of vibrations which affect its various centres—it is then and then only that it can consciously function in the higher planes in full possession of all its powers. The memory remains intact, and the Ego passes from one state of consciousness to another without the temporary lapses of memory and self-consciousness, and is said to be awake in the higher planes, no longer the passive creature of circumstances, the sport of the forces and forms, no longer led hither and thither blindly by these, but as a centre of consciousness which displays all the powers of judgment and discrimination, of choice and direction. In one word, the consciousness then becomes *self-consciousness*, and the tests of self-consciousness—viz., the power of choice and the consciousness of freedom—are fully manifest. Hence the Gītā says:—"The *Sanyami* (the man who has obtained mastery of the mind and the senses) is awake even in that (state) which is night for all beings."*

We must pause and try to understand exactly what this means. A little thought will bring out clearly the difference between the ordinary waking and dream consciousness and those states of a *Yogi*. In the lower stages, the waking consciousness is almost similar to the dream consciousness, being entirely dominated by forms, the slave of circumstances. If, however, we take the instance of the waking consciousness of an average educated man, we see that he can display something of the power of choice. He can, with the help of the associations of the physical body, its heredity

* Gītā, II. 69.

and so forth, choose to a certain extent between things. Thus for example, helped by the ideas of heredity, he fights against the attractions of the flesh. Helped by the prevailing morality of society, and unconsciously led on thereby, he would even spurn the idea of indulging in the common vices. But observe what takes place in dreams. When such a man goes to the astral plane, at once a marked difference is felt. The things wherein he could have successfully exercised his powers of choice, of reasoning, of freedom,—things which he would have avoided doing while in the waking consciousness, while clothed with and backed by a well-organised physical body—these very things he would oftentimes do in dreams. It is as it were a compelling force against which he is powerless which makes him do these. The powers of choice and reasoning are lost, and virtually he becomes a different being from what he thought himself to be while awake. As a river swollen with flood overflows its banks, sweeping away the artificial dams erected by puny men, so the veneer of virtue, of choice and reasoning, is clean scraped off, and our man stands naked as he really is. The unorganised astral vehicle, containing generally the seeds of disharmony within it, un-reduced and impure, dominates over the consciousness. The powers of discrimination manifesting with the help of a well-organised physical vehicle are submerged, and the Ego is led hither and thither by every chance current in the astral plane without reason or purpose. When by control and the practice of virtues, by discrimination and *Viveka*, the Ego comes to know the desire-forms as being of the non-Ego—when by working with and aided by a stable physical *upādhi* it develops stable higher bodies—when by the dim cognition of the Higher Self, it can view these lower forms and forces as being separate from it, then only can it hope to bridge the gulfs which exist between different planes, between different bodies, without the powers of self-conscious-

ness being lost in the transit. Thus we have not only the difference in the I-notion due to the colouring of the various vehicles, but also the difficulty of passing the neutral states. Easier far to have something of the reasoning powers while in the higher planes, but the difficulty of passing these neutral barriers is almost insurmountable.

The difficulties which stand in the way of such self-realisation may thus be classified under two distinct heads. In the first place, we pin our existence and consciousness, our reason and discrimination, our love and aspiration to the physical personality. As a consequence we get lost when the physical body drops. The very attachment to forms, the very desire of maintaining the continuity of the physical Ego, is the cause of the loss of self-consciousness. The I-notion rises and falls with the fluctuations in the form with which it is, for the sake of existence and consciousness, identified. Yet, as we have already seen, this linking of the consciousness with the stable physical *upadhi* is still necessary for the evolution, or rather the manifestation, of a stable I-notion. This is why the Gītā says "He who can bear with equanimity the impulses of *Kama* and anger before the physical body drops, he is destined for immortality."* We can only build the higher vehicles with the help of the stability of the physical basis, a fact which lies at the root of *Karma Yoga*.

The dilemma aforesaid, if carefully analysed, will be seen to impose two conditions, which must be fulfilled ere the consciousness can string together in an all-pervading I-notion the existence in the different planes of being.

First, one has to achieve perfect non-attachment to the bodies—to the entire form-side in the several planes, together with the energies connected therewith. These, as we have seen, subdivide and imprison the I-notion and pin it to the

* Gītā, V. 23.

respective planes. This condition is more or less a negative one, though necessary to strengthen and fortify the I-notion. Calm analysis of all the states and contents of consciousness, trying to find out the Real and distinguish it from the accidental colourings, is a most effective means to the attainment of this supreme dispassion. Without this non-attachment to the forms, which manifests principally as a desire for fruits, there can be no harmony, and hence no union of the lower personality with the higher centre of consciousness. Soul perception there cannot be if the soul is lost sight of in the hurry and bustle of phenomenal life. How can there be real existence if the I-notion is imbedded in the lower forms, if it depends upon these for life, if it still clings to the *mayavic* forms and broken images for sustenance, for existence? How can there be *peace* and *bliss*, if such peace and bliss are sought for in, and based upon forms which are transitory in their nature and limiting in their tendency?

We pin our faith, our life and consciousness, on phenomenal things, and as a result our *self-consciousness* is affected by the changes in the things. Constant, watchful and unimpassioned *Viveka* is therefore necessary in order to free the consciousness from the limitations imposed by the attachment to forms—forms which are yet necessary for the stability of the higher bodies in the earlier stages.

In the second place, there must be some conception of the real I, the Higher I-notion which pervades all the different planes—the dim notion of the abstract I which remains the same even when subjected to the forms of the different planes. Without this notion and the consequent buoyancy of the personality towards its source there can be no conscious evolution. Without this I-notion which runs through the pairs of opposites, which is above the accidents

of forms, the gap will ever remain unbridged. And there can be no existence for one whose consciousness cannot remain the same, even while passing through the neutral barriers spoken of above, and unless and until the lower personality has by love assimilated the nature of the Higher self so as to be able to function in it in full consciousness. As the Gītā says—"There is no Buddhi (true-apperception) for the ununited, there is no existence for the unharmonised, and without self-conscious existence there is no peace and hence no bliss."* There can be no knowledge and wisdom unless the memory remains the same and the Higher Self is sensed, which, according to the Srimadbhagavat, XI. 3-36, is "the one constant Reality pervading the Jagrata, Swapna, and Shusupti states."

Now this union and harmony are impossible for the lower and apparently separated self unless the barrier is removed and the personality is for a time uplifted and shown the true nature of its source, the Divine Man. Very pithily are the two conditions of the true life expressed in the following :

"Before the soul can see, the harmony within must be attained and fleshly eyes be rendered blind to all illusions." †

How can we attain to this harmony unless we are by love and sacrifice harmonised to One who has attained to this harmony? How can the fleshly eyes be rendered blind to all illusions, and see the harmony, unless the Guru opens our eyes to it and raises the personality to a point where, being outside the trammels of the laws of the lower planes, it can see the "Silent Speaker" and be united thereto just as the form to which the clay is moulded is first united with the potter's mind?

* Gītā, II. 66.

† *Voice of the Silence.*

Before the eyes of the soul can be opened they must have developed the power of penetrating through the outer veil and recognising the one Ego, the Divine Man, without being blinded by the forms and dazed by the splendour of the forces.

CHAPTER XII.

THE GOAL OF THE SANKHYA YOGA.

WE have seen how true discrimination—the examination and analysis of the personal self in the light of the Divine Man—is necessary in the *Sankhya Yoga*, and how the control of the lower nature and its separation go to help the evolution, making the causal body a stable organism with all its powers brought out and fully developed, a fit and proper vehicle for the expression of the One Life and Consciousness. The *kama* of the lower planes is killed out with the help of this stable vehicle.

There is however one danger, and a very serious one, in this separative process, in this method of eliminating the non-eternal from the eternal element in Man, or rather its expression through the causal body. The causal body has, in common with all other forms, a tendency towards crystallization and rigidity. Owing to this process of crystallization, it loses in plasticity, and the life within becomes confined to definite and rigid grooves for its manifestation—to definite lines of activity which shut out the consciousness within from rising up to its Source. The I-notion thus hardened loses its powers of co-ordination and adaptation, and becoming identified with the causal vehicle is transformed into what is called *Ahamkara* or

egoism. The Self, the Atman, is thus individualised within the rigid bounds of the hardened causal body.

Such an I appears to be a centre of strength and is generally mistaken for the real I in us. But though such a man is self-centred—centred on the rigid notions of a hardened I, an I which is superior to the I-notions of the lower vehicles—though he is not disturbed by untoward circumstances, viewing with a sort of calm equanimity and dispassion all the ills of life in the lower planes, and though he can indraw himself within the strong carapace of I-hood on the causal plane, yet he is quite different from the *Gnanin*, the really wise. Both the *Gnanin*, the fully illuminated, and the man within the rigid bounds of the causal I-notion of separated individuality, will thus appear the same to us in the lower planes. Both are able to bear with all the mayavic ills of life. The thick and almost impervious barrier of “self-hood” serves with the egoistic man as a breakwater whereon the hostile forces of the lower planes spend themselves, without affecting the Ego, protected by the shell of individuality. The likeness between the two is, however, confined to the mere externals, to the outer fringes of being. The illuminated, the really wise man has got a stable causal *upadhi* organic in character and stable as regards the form. He does not identify himself with the vehicle of individuality. To him it is a vehicle only less temporary than the lower ones. He can use it at his own will and pleasure. His consciousness does not depend on and is not limited by the body, and is unaffected by the forces. He is calm and dispassioned because he sees the one I, the Sat, in everything. The very desire of conscious existence as a centre, as a well-defined something, cannot master him, for the truly wise sees the I in everything and everything in the I.

On the other hand, the man dominated by Ahamkara views

things with indifference, not because he has pierced through the crusts of things and seen the one Life within, but because of the consciousness that within the strong fortress of individuality he is safe from the hostile forces. Frightened with the sight of the hot tears of pain, of misery in the phenomenal planes lower than the causal, he indraws himself and takes refuge within the hardened I-notion. He is dispassionate, not because he has seen the one Life which alone is worth living for, but because he thinks that his life is separated from the Life in the lower planes. He is calm because his I-notion is so hardened that it cannot vibrate in unison with the disturbing vibrations from the external world which cannot penetrate the thick barrier of self-hood. He is limited and conditioned by the very I-notion which helps him to indraw himself, while the true *Gnanin* gives, as H. P. B. puts it, "the self to non-self and being to non-being," and is not limited by the notion of individuality. The body of individuality is not in him a limitation to consciousness, but a plastic instrument for service.

The body of individuality, growing as it does by separation, by the accentuation of the I against the not-I, has a strong tendency towards crystallization and rigidity. Strong though it be, it is somewhat like the body of an athlete, subject to the defect of what is known as lop-sided development. The parts most exercised develop at the cost of the others not so used, and even of the higher powers. The spirit of exclusion, the idea of separation, which lie at the basis of such development, render the growth of the component parts incongruous to each other and disharmonious to the whole. In a rigid causal body, there is no harmony between the several parts and their several functions. It develops in rigid lines which exclude others not in consonance with them. Then again, just as the physical body of the athlete grows at the cost of the higher principles and intellect, so

also the body of individuality, fed by the principle of separation and nurtured with the ideas of isolation, vampirises over the other principles in man. Necessary to a certain extent, in order that within its womb the knowledge-aspect of the Self may develop, necessary in order that the notions of stability and permanence may be evoked within the nascent centre, the very longing for separated existence confines the Ego within their rigid bounds. Prompted by the desire, the longing for continuous existence and consciousness as a separated centre, and so dominated by its vehicle, the Ego seeks only for its particular food, sacrificing everything to the lust of life—to the desire for personal stature. Just as a man who is identified with and limited by the physical vesture, thinking it to be the only I, seeks for the continuous existence of the physical Ego, tries to maintain it and to feed and grow it at the cost of everything else in the universe—just as all the principles of mind and intellect are made to subserve this thirst for separated life in the physical planes, and just as these higher powers, which normally would have helped the man to rise above the limitations of the gross personal self, are utilised and employed as servants to its will and ministers to its comforts, so too the Ego, the Self hardened by the principle of separation, longs for continuous existence in and through the causal vehicle, utilising the higher principles and putting them to contribution in order to maintain a constant consciousness of its own existence and to implant this sense of I over everything. The man identified with the physical body tries to preserve the vehicle for the expression of his life, sacrificing the higher principles of emotion and intellect in order to consummate that end. He cares not what he sacrifices. He shrinks not even from making his higher nature a servant to attain his end. He plans and schemes, reasons and deliberates. He brings the accumulated knowledge of science and

philosophy to bear on the sole question of preserving the physical life. He applies science to discover for him new pleasures and also new antidotes to neutralise the physical effects of this lust for life. In order to live, and fondly hoping to find out new medicines which will preserve his physical vehicle even when by going against the law he makes it weak and decrepit, he takes to dangerous paths, hoping thereby to discover aids to maintain physical existence. He makes of religion even a means to indulge in the foolish fancy of continuing the physical existence. In churches he seeks for reserved pews, stained glass windows, memorial tablets and canonisation. He schemes to convert other people to his views. He sends missionaries abroad to convert the heathen, while his brothers at home are starving in body and mind and are found wanting in commonplace morals. In politics, he wages wars in the name of the nation to satisfy his personal ends. And the horrors of war, of desolate homes, are nothing to him, provided his object is consummated.

So too with a man who has got a hardened causal body, only in his case the selfishness is towering and colossal. Loth to drop the rigid and separated sense of the I in the causal planes he becomes a terror to all. Sacrificing everything in order that he may live, setting at naught the Divine Laws of being, he takes to what is called the Left-hand Path, and is the fruitful source of Black Magic, proving a veritable scourge to humanity.

Even a stable and organised causal body is an insufficient protection against the disturbing effects of the senses. For as the Gîtâ says:—"The dominating senses overpower the reason of the discriminating man (even when) striving his best."* The reason is apparent and not far to seek. Ordinarily the senses and the mind are viewed as the not-I and

* Gîtâ, II. 60.

so controlled. They are recognised as external to the Human self—the Human centre of consciousness. Thus regarded, they become by the very act of cognition a hostile force in opposition to the Ego,—like wild animals trained to obedience. But when the limit of such control is passed, they too, like their analogues in external nature, rise up in rebellion and ultimately overthrow the artificial harmony.

They are not assimilated, they are not known as the relics of the sacrifice of the Logic Life and Divine Consciousness, which reflects itself in Man as the I. Their divine origin—the guiding life of the Devas as manifested in them—remains therefore unrealized. Hence instead of homogeneity in the one I-consciousness, we get an artificial harmony which attempts to gloss over and polish off the heterogeneity inside by a veneer of apparent self-knowledge—a harmony which is the work of separation and forced control. The untransmuted lower nature remains always a potential factor containing the germs of dissolution and disharmony. Thus we see cases of apparently good and honest people suddenly turning to evil ways.

The very process of discrimination, of *Viveka*, without the sense of a higher harmony, has the effect of accentuating the lower nature. The very idea of separation strengthens the separative tendency in these lower elements in man. The law, that action is followed by reaction, holds good in every plane, and is the cause of the vivification of the lower nature observable in the case of an ardent aspiration to lead the higher life. The more ardent the aspiration, the greater the sense of obstruction felt. The rigidity of the causal body stands in the way of new adaptations and adjustments. The causal body, so to say, gets stereotyped as regards the particular lines of thinking and modes of thought, and resists everything new, and becomes thus a doubtful ally in fighting with unknown and unaccustomed

vibrations. The stronger the energy thus put forth, the greater the resistance generated by such a rigid causal body. But a causal body which is plastic and organised, which has developed itself into a stable organism without losing its plasticity and powers of adjustment, can adapt itself to any vibration without disturbing its continuous existence. A causal body which is rigid cannot do so, and if the strain is greater than the power of cohesion, it ultimately breaks. The rigid earth is cut asunder by a stroke from a sharpened sword, but the mobile water, in not resisting too much this stroke, can at once return to its original state.

Due to these and other causes, we find even men of stable mind hurled from the empyrean heights. The fall of the mighty *Rishis*, found so often in the *Shastras*, is an example to the point. Even the great Rishi Vishvamitra had to give up the attachment to the life of the higher planes, before he attained to freedom and bliss. The sage *Narada* had to fall owing to his *Ahamkara* in a subtle form.

Agreeably to the method adopted by the Divine Teacher in communicating the Gītā, the Lord takes up thus the *Sankhya* view of the *Purusha* and the *Prakriti* and explains how, by discrimination and dispassion, a knowledge of the Ego, as distinct from the forms it vitalises, can be obtained. Thus He describes the *Sthitapragna* state, the state of the *muni* of stable mind, the state in which the Higher Self in man, the Individual, sees itself as such, as the unchanging spectator, calm and dispassionate, of the play of *Prakriti* acting in and through the various vehicles. Then He adds to the conceptions already explained—conceptions which were known by the name of the *Sankhya*—a touch of His magic wand, which transforms the rigidity and separateness of the *Sankhya* into an exquisite harmony and homogeneity. Thus the whole thesis of the Second Chapter, the cognition of the Ego as opposed to the non-Ego, implies a knowledge

of the opposite substances. This distinction, this idea of separation, which is the logical outcome of the discrimination between the I and the not-I, has, as we have seen, a tendency towards rigidity, a tendency to accentuate the separative factor in man, the *ahamkara* or egoism. This separative tendency of thinking stands in the way of the realisation of the oneness of Life amidst diversity of forms. Necessary in order to develop and manifest into being a Centre which will be strong enough to bear the disintegrating strains of *pralaya*; necessary to develop a sense of being which the conflicting forces of a dying cosmos cannot disturb, yet this separative tendency results, as we have seen, in the crystallization of the causal body and the attachment of the I to it. Like the womb, the causal body is necessary to feed and nourish the I-sense and make it stable and permanent. But when the body becomes hardened, it resists the expansion of the stable I-notion thus generated; and when the Ego gets identified with the hardened vehicle, then it becomes the fruitful source of evil. Such a hardened causal body, such a rigid and exclusive sense of the I, is what is termed "the great heresy" leading a man to the Black Path, seeking expression for this separated consciousness. Tinged with this separative tendency, this sense of being as the spectator accentuates the great illusion and generates in the Ego a desire for sensation in the higher planes and a craving, a hunger for growth and a passion for personal stature. Waxing stronger, the soul extends her silver threads, and beholding her image in the waves of space, she whispers "This is I" with a deep sense of her superiority over the manifested world of forms. The Ego, developing its powers through dispassion and knowledge, and identified with the causal vehicle, magnifies itself and wants to see itself projected in space, relating everything to this separated existence. Therefore is it that this

identification with the causal body is to be conquered, and this sense of the causal-I to be known and realised as a figment in Time and Space, a phenomenal appearance of the one I, the Logos of the system. Hence is it that the opposite qualities of *Raga*, the attachment, the attraction towards this transcendent egoism and *Dvesha* or repulsion towards the not-I, which are the limits of the causal consciousness, are to be eliminated.

Now this killing out of the slavery to the attractions of Ahamkara is only possible when there is a recognition by the Buddhi of the Life beyond the individuality—when there is a knowledge of something higher than the Ego in the causal body. The principle of separation which lies at the root of attachment and repulsion cannot be killed out with the help of any force obtaining in the causal plane. The causal body is by its nature separative, and even the Gods of Swarga have their likes and dislikes. As already said, though necessary for the evolution of permanence and stability, for the strength and solidarity of a true I-notion, for the establishment of a centre which can maintain itself in the midst of the dissolution of the three Lokas, when everything external, wherein ordinarily we reflect ourselves for the purpose of existence, falls away—yet this attachment to the individual life becomes the greatest drawback to the realisation of the Universal. Virtues, powers, intellections—all these cannot avail, for all these have their being in the separated sense of the I. The peace which comes of surrendering all likes and dislikes is possible only when the Triangle becoming Quaternary is inscribed in the Circle, when the perfect Man—unifying his consciousness by indrawing the purified personality—so expands as to step beyond the limitations of the causal body and embrace the Logos—when the Divine Man, now a perfect square, recognises Himself as a mode of expression of the Divine Life, a form of the Divine Conscious-

ness, an organ of *Iswara* and an image and reflection of the true Self.

The Image Man, the Human Monad, spiritualised and unified, has now to transcend its own life. Hitherto the law of growth was separation and concentration, through which the I-notion was fed, nourished and finally made self-centred. But, henceforth, growth is only possible if the rigidity of the I-notion due to the attachment to the causal body is toned down and softened by devotion. The love of the I, the greatest force and the most potent for evolution in the lower planes, has now to be replaced by the love of *Iswara*, who is the *All*. Expansion takes the place of concentration, and surrender is utilised to kill out the sense of separation.

Hence it is that the Lord says—"Having controlled the senses, unified with the Higher Self, remain devoted to Me." *

This is the grand finishing touch to the evolution of the individual, which transforms the possible rigidity and hardening of *Ahamkara*. This is what stands the Ego in good stead in a higher critical state of consciousness when at *pralaya* the Divine indraws His manifested form ; this is what makes him a channel for the workings of the Divine Life in manifestation. This recognition of the Supreme is the one solvent of all *Kama*. The Ego thus harmonised with the Source of all becomes an ocean of consciousness which embraces equally the high and the low, and wherein these hitherto conflicting elements generate not even a ripple of disturbance. The lower nature thus transmuted under the magician's wand serves to express the Divine Life more fully than any disjoined and separated centre, however high, could have done. So the *Gîtâ* says—"The Purusha (individual) who, forsaking all kama, acts dis-

* *Gîtâ*, II. 61.

passionately, devoid of the sense of *mineness* and free from Ahamkara, verily gets the supreme peace." *

So also the Shrimad Bhagavat (I. 2-6) says :—"That is the supreme *dharma* for the Individual which leads to devotion to the One Supreme"—that is its high privilege, its sole fruition.

* Gītā, II. 71.

